Onto the National Stage

CONGRESSWOMEN IN AN AGE OF CRISES, 1935–1954

THIRTY-SIX WOMEN ENTERED CONGRESS BETWEEN 1935 AND 1954, a tumultuous two decades that encompassed the Great Depression, World War II, and the start of the Cold War. Women participated in America's survival, recovery, and ascent to world power in important and unprecedented ways; they became shapers of the welfare state, workers during wartime, and members of the military. During this time the nation's capital took on increasing importance in the everyday lives of average Americans. The Great Depression and the specter of global war transformed the role of the federal government, making it a provider and protector. Like their male counterparts, women in Congress legislated to provide economic relief to their constituents, debated the merits of government intervention to cure the economy, argued about America's role in world affairs, and grappled with challenges and opportunities during wartime.

Distinct trends persisted from the pioneer generation of women in Congress. Second-generation women still made up only a small fraction of the total congressional membership. At their peak, 15 women served in the 83rd Congress

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Senators Joseph T. Robinson (far left) and Hattie W. Caraway of Arkansas at the June 1936 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at which President Franklin Roosevelt was nominated to a second term. Caraway was a supporter of the Roosevelt administration's New Deal economic recovery programs, many of which benefited constituents in her agriculture-based state.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION


"The New Deal"
Never
a Step Backward
ARKANSAS

(1953–1955)—about 2.8 percent. These numbers afforded women scant leverage to pursue a unified agenda, though few seemed inclined to champion what would later be called "women's issues." The widow-familial succession remained for women a primary route to political office.

Subtle changes, however, slowly advanced women's status on Capitol Hill. By and large, women elected to Congress between 1935 and 1954 had more experience as politicians or as party officials than did their predecessors. In the postwar era, they were appointed more often to influential committees, including those with jurisdiction over military affairs, the judiciary, and agriculture. Also, several women emerged as national figures and were prominently featured as spokespersons by their parties; this was a significant break from tradition.

Change and Continuity:

Political Experience, Committee Assignments, and Familial Connections

Compared with the pioneer generation, the women Members elected during this period had far more political experience. Half the women in the second generation (18) had served as public officeholders or as party officials. Six served in state legislatures or other statewide offices. Chase Woodhouse of Connecticut served two terms as a popular secretary of state. Four women held local political office, and 11 served as party officials at the state and national levels. The level of education of this group of Congresswomen mirrored that of the pioneer generation; two-thirds (24 of 36) had received some kind of postsecondary education. Political experience made women more attractive as candidates for national office. In 1934, Caroline O'Day of New York told campaign crowds that the "political apprenticeship" of women had come to an end. With 31 women running for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1934—and a record 38 in 1936 (12 of them nominated by the major parties)—O'Day's contention seemed validated.[1]

The median age at which women were elected to Congress (49 years) was slightly lower. This figure is important largely because it determines a Member's ability to accrue the seniority requisite for leadership positions. By comparison, the average

Congresswoman Nan Honeyman of Oregon joins members of the House Naval Affairs Committee during an inspection tour of the Naval Air Station at Seattle, Washington. Honeyman, an ally of the Franklin Roosevelt administration, had advocated the construction of a major naval facility along the Columbia River in Oregon.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

age of all House Members entering Congress from 1931 to 1950 was 45 years; nearly 30 percent of the men were 39 or younger. The median age at retirement during this era ranged from 53 to 57 years.[2] Three women, all during World War II, were elected in their 30s—Winifred Stanley of New York, 33, the youngest woman elected to Congress to that date; Katharine Byron of Maryland, 37; and Clare Boothe Luce of Connecticut, 39. The oldest woman elected to Congress during this period was 66-year-old Hazel Abel of Nebraska, a distinguished state official who served a brief Senate term in 1954.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, through the direct and indirect efforts of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, helped boost the number of Democratic women in Congress. Many of the women who rose in the 1930s to prominent positions in the federal government had known the First Lady since the days when she worked in Greenwich Village settlement houses and registered women voters across New York state.[3] In making these appointments, President Roosevelt broke with precedent; Frances Perkins was the first woman to serve in the President's Cabinet (Labor Secretary), former House Member Ruth Bryan Owen was the first woman to serve as U.S. Ambassador (to Sweden), and Florence Allen was the first woman judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Connections to Eleanor Roosevelt proved to be influential in several Congresswomen's careers. Caroline O'Day, for example, was among Eleanor Roosevelt's confidantes. The pair had traversed New York in the 1920s, organizing women voters and working on Governor Al Smith's 1928 presidential campaign. In the 1934 midterm elections, Roosevelt made campaign appearances on O'Day's behalf, becoming the first First Lady to stump for a candidate. O'Day's campaign was successful, and she remained in Congress for nearly a decade. Congresswoman Nan Wood Honeyman of Oregon, an unflagging supporter of FDR, had known Eleanor Roosevelt since their days at finishing school in New York City. Helen Gahagan Douglas of California conferred often with the First Lady. Eleanor Roosevelt campaigned for successful Democrats Katharine Byron of Maryland and Chase Woodhouse, among others, and she inspired young women to consider political life. Coya Knutson of Minnesota recalled that a June 1942 radio address by Eleanor Roosevelt prodded her to become active in civic affairs. "It was as if the sun burned into me that day," Knutson said.[4]

Impressive political résumés helped more women secure influential committee assignments, particularly during and after the Second World War, when women were assigned to prominent panels such as Agriculture, Armed Services, Naval Affairs, Public Works, Rivers and Harbors, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, Judiciary, and Interior and Insular Affairs. Five women were assigned to the Foreign Affairs Committee, and four served on the Banking and Currency Committee during this era. Other assignments reinforced patterns set during the first generation of women in Congress, when women legislated on second- or third-tier panels like Education, Veterans' Affairs, Post Office and Civil Service, and Government Operations. Many of these committees dealt with issues that had long been considered part of a woman's sphere. Women served on more than 30 House committees during this era. In the Senate, where only two women served an entire term or longer, women won appointments to roughly 20 committees.[5] A trailblazer, Margaret Chase Smith of Maine was a member of the powerful Appropriations and Armed Services panels. Four women chaired six congressional

committees during the period from 1935 to 1954: Representative Mary Norton of New Jersey—District of Columbia (1935–1937), Labor (1937–1947), Memorials (1941–1943), and House Administration (1949–1951); Representative O'Day—Election of the President, Vice President and Representatives in Congress (1937–1943); Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts—Veterans' Affairs (1947–1949 and 1953–1955); and Senator Hattie Caraway of Arkansas—Enrolled Bills (1933–1945).

House leaders, particularly Speakers Joe Martin of Massachusetts and Sam Rayburn of Texas, promoted women to key positions. As Republican Minority Leader in 1943, Martin secured seats for Margaret Chase Smith and Clare Boothe Luce on Naval Affairs and Military Affairs, respectively, to recognize women's contributions to the war effort and to bring "a woman's viewpoint" to traditionally all-male committees.[6] Rayburn steered several women onto important committees, including Chase Woodhouse, with whom he had a frank and warm relationship. "You get the same pay as we do, don't you?" Rayburn once asked her. "Yes, sir, for a change," Woodhouse replied. "And you worked three times as hard to get here as any of us did," he said.[7] Speaker Rayburn, who shared Woodhouse's disdain for fundraising and admired her efforts to keep lobbyists at arm's length, confided to her, "If I had twenty-four like you, I'd be happy."[8] Later in his Speakership, Rayburn helped persuade reluctant committee chairmen to accept Coya Knutson and Martha Griffiths of Michigan as members of powerful panels.

With many men away on overseas military duty during World War II, American women played an increasingly important role in the national economy during the war. Some, like this woman, filled nontraditional roles. She is working as a riveter on an aircraft assembly line.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The widow's mandate, or familial connection, remained prevalent in the second generation of women in Congress. Fourteen of the 36 women who were elected or appointed directly succeeded their husbands. Another woman, Leonor Sullivan of Missouri, won election in 1952 to the St. Louis district served by her late husband for much of the 1940s. Dixie Graves of Alabama was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1937 by her husband, Governor Bibb Graves. In all, 44 percent of the women from this generation came to Congress through familial connections. The persistence of this trend explains another statistic—nearly half the women elected or appointed in this era (17) served one term or less. This was particularly true of southern widows like Willa Fulmer of South Carolina, Florence Gibbs of Georgia, Elizabeth Gasque of South Carolina, Rose Long of Louisiana, and Clara McMillan of South Carolina, who were chosen by party leaders as temporary placeholders until a permanent male successor could be found. For the first time in both chambers, a woman succeeded a woman; Representative Stanley succeeded retiring Congresswoman O'Day in a New York At-Large seat in 1943, and Hazel Abel was elected Senator from Nebraska in 1954, succeeding Republican appointee Eva Bowring.

Legislative Interests and Achievements:

Ongoing Great Depression

Between 1933 and 1938, Congress passed the New Deal, a sweeping package of regulatory and economic recovery policies to alleviate the effects of the Great Depression. These changes affected virtually every facet of American life—transportation, banking, stock market regulation, agricultural practices, labor practices (including the minimum wage, the maximum length of the workday, and collective bargaining), public works, and even the arts. Many of President Franklin Roosevelt's

proposals were approved by Congress in the first 100 days of his term, including the Emergency Banking Relief Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Federal Emergency Relief Act, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Recovery Act.

A "second" New Deal began in 1935, as the focus on shoring up the economy shifted to providing a long-term economic safety net for all Americans. In 1935, congressional passage of the Social Security Act created unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, and public assistance programs such as Aid to Families of Dependent Children.[9] These programs helped the American family and were particularly critical to women, who often silently bore the brunt of the Great Depression. Unmarried women, single mothers, and wives in need of jobs to support their families were disadvantaged not only by the scarcity of employment but also by the widespread belief that a woman's place was at home tending to the family.[10] As chair of the Labor Committee, starting in 1937, Representative Mary Norton shaped late New Deal legislation, particularly the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, which she personally shepherded through committee and onto the House Floor for a vote. The act provided for a 40-hour workweek, outlawed child labor, and set a minimum wage of 25 cents per hour. Norton later helped establish a permanent Fair Employment Practice Committee to prevent racial and gender discrimination in hiring and helped secure pensions for elective and executive offices by expanding the retirement system for federal employees.

After his overwhelming re-election victory in 1936, President Roosevelt hatched an aggressive legislative plan to place as many as six additional Justices on the Supreme Court. Made public in February 1937, FDR's proposal was a thinly disguised effort to add Justices favoring his economic policies to the high court, which had recently nullified key New Deal programs such as the National Recovery Administration and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Public controversy ensued, and Congress refused to restructure the judiciary.[11] The court-packing episode is widely viewed as the beginning of the end of the New Deal reforms, as southern Democrats aligned with Republicans to block the administration's initiatives at home. The First Lady and Interior Secretary Harold Ickes stumped in Congresswoman Honeyman's Portland district during her 1938 re-election campaign, which she lost largely because of her unflagging support for FDR. During the next three elections, Republican women critics of the New Deal won election to Congress—Jessie Sumner of Illinois (1938), Frances Bolton of Ohio (1940), Smith (1940), Luce (1942), and Stanley (1942).

Intervention Versus Isolation

By the late 1930s, with European countries arming for war and tensions increasing due to Japanese expansion in the Pacific, Congress shifted its focus to preparing for war and to America's role in world affairs. In the years after World War I, a strong isolationist movement spearheaded by Members of Congress from midwestern states gripped the country. The isolationists believed that the Woodrow Wilson administration's pro-Allied slant and big business interests had drawn the United States into World War I, and they were committed to avoiding another world war. From 1935 to 1937, Congress passed a series of neutrality acts that incrementally banned arms trade with belligerent countries, the extension of credit to warring countries, travel on belligerent ships, and the arming of American

A World War II recruiting poster for the Women's Army Corp (WAC). Legislation authored by Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers created the WAC shortly after America entered World War II. In the Army and other military branches, women took on important assignments, among them roles as support staff, nurses, and pilots.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

merchant ships. The final bill, the Neutrality Act of 1937, provided that at the President's discretion, belligerent countries could purchase nonembargoed goods on a "cash-and-carry" basis, that is, the goods would be paid for when they were purchased and transported on the belligerent country's own vessels.

Opposition to American intervention in a potential world conflict centered in the late 1930s around two groups, pacifists and isolationists. In addition to monitoring the growing fascist threat in Europe and Asia, the FDR administration was waging a protracted battle at home with a core group of isolationists in Congress who resisted increasing pressure to provide economic and military support for America's traditional partners in the Atlantic Alliance.[12] Jessie Sumner epitomized the isolationist perspective. Elected to the first of four terms in 1938, Sumner was especially critical of American foreign policy in the months immediately after war broke out in Europe in September 1939. She lashed out at the Roosevelt administration for what she viewed as a pro-British bias, insisting, "our historical experience warns us that we cannot safely become an arsenal for belligerents."[13]

Willa L. Fulmer of South Carolina, wife of the late Congressman Hampton P. Fulmer, stands next to Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn for a photo commemorating her swearing-in as a Representative in November 1944. Fulmer, like many other widows elected to Congress, served only as a temporary placeholder for her party, filling out the brief remainder of her husband's term.

IMAGE COURTESY OF AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Caroline O'Day, a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in the 1920s, was the most significant female voice for pacifism in the late 1930s. In 1939, after Germany invaded Poland, beginning the Second World War, O'Day opposed the amendment of earlier neutrality acts that prohibited selling arms or extending credit to belligerent nations. Joining isolationists like Sumner, she also voted against the 1940 Selective Service Act, the nation's first peace-time draft, saying, "As mothers whose sons would be obliged to go to war; as women who, with the children, would remain at home to be the victims of air raids and bombing of cities, we should have the right to vote against it, and express our desire for peace."[14] However, O'Day ultimately supported the war effort when she learned about the nature of the Nazi atrocities in Europe. "We as individuals and as a nation must consent to play our proper role in world affairs," said O'Day, who was at heart, more an internationalist than an isolationist.[15]

Congress eventually voted to repeal the arms embargo against countries fighting Nazi Germany and, for the first time, allowed American merchant ships to convoy arms and equipment to Great Britain. The majority of the women in Congress supported the Roosevelt administration's foreign policy. Clara McMillan of South Carolina, a mother of five young sons, reasoned that preparing for America's seemingly imminent entry into the war would best preserve her sons' safety. Congresswoman Rogers broke with fellow Republicans to vote against the neutrality acts and for the 1940 Selective Service Act, citing the danger posed by Adolf Hitler's Germany. The Selective Service Bill passed Congress and was extended by a narrow margin a year later. Between 1940 and 1947, more than 10 million conscripts served in the U.S. military.

Japan's surprise attack against the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, unified the country for war. More than 2,400 persons were killed, and 19 U.S. Navy ships were sunk or disabled. An anticlimactic but oft-celebrated event in the pacifist crusade occurred the next day, when Jeannette Rankin of Montana cast the lone vote against declaring war on Japan. During her previous term, in 1917, Rankin had voted against U.S. entry into World War I. A devoted pacifist, she served in a variety of peace organizations before being re-elected to Congress in 1940. Rankin's vote against war on Japan effectively ended her House career. "When in a hundred years from now, courage, sheer courage based upon

moral indignation is celebrated in this country," editor William Allen White observed, "the name of Jeannette Rankin, who stood firm in folly for her faith, will be written in monumental bronze, not for what she did but for the way she did it."[16]

Expanding Women's Responsibilities in Wartime

Once the nation was committed to war, women in Congress legislated to make available unprecedented opportunities for women as members and supporters of the U.S. armed services. Congresswoman Rogers authored the May 1942 Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) Act, which created up to 150,000 noncombat positions (primarily in nursing) for women in the U.S. Army. Nearly 350,000 women eventually served as WAACs and in similar groups in other branches of the military, including the navy (WAVES), the coast guard (SPAR), and the marines (MCWR). Another 1,000 women became Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs).[17] Representative Rogers also shaped the landmark Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (commonly known as the G.I. Bill of Rights), which authorized the Veterans' Administration to help servicemen adjust to civilian life by providing financial aid for school and job training, employment programs, federal housing loans, and medical care. Frances Bolton, a moderate isolationist before the war, soon embraced military preparedness. She authored the Bolton Act of 1943, creating the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, which was responsible for training nearly 125,000 women as military nurses. Bolton later toured Europe to observe these women at work in field hospitals. After the war, she advocated a greater role for women in the military and even suggested they be made eligible for future drafts. Margaret Chase Smith also strongly supported women's participation in the military. Her landmark Women's Armed Forces Integration Act, passed in 1948, ensured the permanent inclusion of women in the military.

The war provided new opportunities for some groups of American women. By 1942, so many men had been taken out of the economy to fill the military ranks that

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—WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas of California addresses the 1945 World Youth Rally in New York City. Douglas, elected in the fall of 1944, was a staunch internationalist and an advocate for the creation of the United Nations Organization.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

women were recruited to make up for the "manpower" shortage. The War Manpower Commission created an enduring image of the era with its "Rosie the Riveter" campaign, which aimed to bring women—single and married—into the workforce. Posters of Rosie's muscular, can-do image as a production line worker at an armaments plant projected an unconventional image of women as a source of physical strength. Between 1941 and 1945, some 6 million new women entered the workforce—swelling their ranks to about 19 million and a then-all-time high of 36 percent of the U.S. workforce.[18]

Labor Committee Chairwoman Mary T. Norton urged women not to retreat into the home when the men returned from war. "This is the time for women everywhere to prove that they appreciate the responsibility they have been given," Norton said at the war's end. "Women can't be Sitting-Room Sarahs or Kitchen Katies. They have homes to keep up, food to prepare, families to clothe . . . but they have their world to make. . . . American women today stand on the threshold of a glorious future . . . .They can grasp it . . . or they can let it slide." Norton spoke passionately about the pressure on women from industry and labor unions to vacate jobs for GIs seeking employment: "Women are going to be pushed into a corner, and very soon at that." It would be, she predicted, a "heartbreaking" setback.[19]

Two women work at a clip spring and body assembly line for .30 caliber cartridges at an arsenal in Pennsylvania during World War II. Women filled numerous jobs on the wartime home front that were essential to equipping troops deployed overseas.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FDR LIBRARY/NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Shaping the Postwar Peace

Women Members were involved not only in preparing for and waging war, but also in creating the framework for a lasting peace. In 1944, women rode a wave of internationalist sentiment to Congress, partially signaling the triumph of FDR's foreign policy over the prewar isolationists. Three prominent internationalists—Emily Taft Douglas of Illinois, Chase Going Woodhouse, and Helen Gahagan Douglas—were elected to the House of Representatives. Emily Douglas was a forceful and articulate advocate for the implementation of the Dumbarton Oaks accords that created a postwar United Nations (UN). From her seat on the Banking and Currency Committee, Woodhouse helped execute the Bretton Woods Agreements, which created the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Helen Douglas, a former Hollywood actress, enthusiastically endorsed postwar U.S. reconstruction aid to Europe and supported the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission to ensure that civilians, as well as the military, would have some control over atomic technology. At the opposite end of the spectrum, isolationist Jessie Sumner retired from the House in 1947, citing her frustration with the President's power to set an expansive global U.S. foreign policy.

Civil Rights

The social and economic dislocation that resulted from the Second World War reopened a long-running debate about civil rights in America.[20] Reformers believed that the African-American contributions to the war effort underscored the moral imperative of repealing segregationist laws in the United States. Frances Bolton challenged her colleagues on this point during a debate on outlawing the poll tax used to disenfranchise African Americans:[21] "Even at painful cost, America must be true to her own vision, to her own soul, to her responsibility to tomorrow's world. We talk so much of democracy, of freedom. Can we have either so long as great sections of our land withhold freedom?" Congresswomen took public and, often, conflicting positions on civil rights. In the late 1930s, Senator Dixie Bibb

Graves received national press attention as an opponent of federal action against lynching; she insisted that the practice was in decline and that federal statute would intrude on states' rights. Her colleague Hattie Caraway agreed and later opposed efforts to outlaw poll taxes. Representative O'Day supported antilynching laws. Representative Helen Mankin of Georgia, elected to an abbreviated term in 1946, was an outspoken opponent of the politics of Governor Eugene Talmadge and of Jim Crow laws that disenfranchised southern blacks. Widely popular with the black community in her Atlanta-based district, Mankin was unseated in the fall 1946 elections, when Talmadge officials altered the rules for the Democratic primary. Marguerite Church of Illinois and Helen Douglas challenged segregationist dining policies in the Capitol. At the very end of the period, Iris Blitch of Georgia, a Talmadge protégé, won election to the first of four House terms and signed the "Southern Manifesto," opposing federal efforts to end racial segregation in the South.

The Cold War and McCarthyism

As the Second World War ended, the victorious alliance between Washington and Moscow began to weaken. Soviet forces, which had broken the backbone of the German army, occupied virtually every Eastern European capital. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin believed Russian security interests required control of western invasion routes used by the Germans to invade his homeland twice during his lifetime. Rather than evacuate Eastern Europe and East Germany, the Soviet Red Army tightened Moscow's grip and installed pliant communist regimes. A war of words and mutual suspicions developed. By 1947, officials in Washington had decided to try to contain communism by economic and military means—implementing the Marshall Plan to rebuild Western Europe and West Germany and helping countries plagued by communist insurgencies. The first Soviet test of an atomic bomb in 1949, the founding of the communist People's Republic of China the same year, and communist North Korea's invasion of South Korea in June 1950 seemed to confirm Americans' worst fears about the expansion of international communism.[22]

Several women in Congress were vocal advocates of a hard-line American policy toward the Soviet Union. Jessie Sumner raised concerns early on about the nature of Stalinist foreign policy, arguing that Americans should beware of supporting postwar international organizations because, she believed, they would be co-opted by communist powers. Congresswoman Luce also criticized Soviet motives, especially in regard to Polish sovereignty and, along with other Members of Congress, accused the Roosevelt administration of capitulating to Stalin's demands for a Russian sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Congresswoman Edna Kelly of New York, elected to the House in 1949, was an ardent anticommunist who gained the influential post of head of the European Affairs Subcommittee on the Foreign Affairs panel. Kelly and others, such as Woodhouse, backed the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949, supported the Marshall Plan, and advocated large foreign-aid packages to help governments resist communist insurgents.

The restructuring of U.S. national security policy and the billions of dollars spent on the global war on communism changed America's international role. Not all Congresswomen agreed that such expenditures were in the best interests of the American people. Maude Kee of West Virginia questioned the urgency of giving multibillion-dollar aid packages to foreign countries when residents of her rural

Madame Chiang (left), wife of Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, confers with Congresswoman Marguerite Church of Illinois. Church took a keen interest in how American foreign aid dollars were spent in the effort to win the global struggle against communism.
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

"Grable" was a 15-kiloton atomic weapon—stronger than the nuclear blasts that leveled Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II—detonated in 1953, at a Nevada test site. The nuclear mushroom cloud became a symbol of the Cold War and a constant reminder that the superpower confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union could spiral into nuclear destruction.
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Women of the 83rd Congress (1953–1955). Seated, from left: Vera Buchanan of Pennsylvania, Leonor Sullivan of Missouri, Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, Marguerite Church of Illinois, Gracie Pfost of Idaho. Standing, from left: Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, Frances P. Bolton of Ohio, Ruth Thompson of Michigan, Cecil Harden of Indiana, Maude Kee of West Virginia, and Elizabeth St. George of New York.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Congresswomen were more likely to bring a domestic perspective to the national security debate, arguing that improved economic and educational opportunities would best protect Americans' freedoms.

Appalachian district suffered from high unemployment and a low standard of living. Vera Buchanan of Pennsylvania publicly raised concerns about the threats of officials in the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration to annihilate the Soviet Union, using nuclear weapons in "massive retaliation" for military provocation. Marguerite Stitt Church of Illinois questioned expenditures of vast sums on military hardware for foreign countries, instead of on job-training and economic programs for women in developing countries. Other women from this period, such as O'Day and Woodhouse (and later in the Cold War, Edith Green and Coya Knutson) brought a domestic perspective to the national security debate, arguing that improved economic and educational opportunities would best protect Americans' freedom. Helen Douglas linked U.S. civil rights reforms with Cold War national security objectives. Winning the support of potential allies in the global struggle against communism required fundamental changes at home. Racial segregation in America, Douglas said on the House Floor, "raises the question among the colonial peoples of the earth . . . as to whether or not we are really their friends, whether or not we will ever understand their longing and right for self-determination."[23]

Indeed, the domestic consequences of the Cold War were profound. American officials had to garner public support for huge outlays for the containment policy and, in making their case about the dangers of communism abroad, stoked fears of communist infiltration at home. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), which held numerous high-profile public hearings, became a soapbox from which anticommunist Members of Congress called attention to the "red menace."[24]

During its 37-year history, no woman served on HUAC (later renamed the Internal Security Committee), though several, including Edith Nourse Rogers and Edna Kelly, supported its usefulness. Both Helen Douglas and Emily Douglas attacked HUAC for its brusque tactics, which included publicizing unsubstantiated rumors. "No men are pure and unbiased enough to have this immense power to

discredit, accuse and denounce which this committee wields," Helen Douglas declared. "It is un-American in-itself to be condemned in the press or before the public without trial or hearing."[25] In a speech entitled "My Democratic Credo," Douglas identified the real dangers to democracy as demagoguery and repressive domestic controls justified in the name of national security.[26] "Have we talked about communists so much that we have begun to imitate them?" she asked.[27] In a 1950 campaign for one of California's seats in the U.S. Senate, Representative Richard Nixon of California, a member of HUAC, successfully employed smear tactics to defeat Congresswoman Douglas, whom he labeled a communist sympathizer. Representative Reva Bosone of Utah, formerly a Salt Lake City judge, was turned out of office two years later, partly because her opponent attacked her for opposing a bill granting wide-ranging powers to the newly created Central Intelligence Agency.

Margaret Chase Smith, a freshman Senator, directly challenged McCarthy in a Senate Floor speech that demonstrated great moral courage.

In the U.S. Senate, Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin made the shocking claim in a February 1950 speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, that he possessed a list of 205 communists employed at the State Department. He then labeled World War II hero and Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall a traitor and rebuked President Harry Truman and Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson for being "soft" on communism. As chairman of the Government Operations Committee's Subcommittee on Investigations in the 83rd Congress (1953–1955), McCarthy commenced hearings to root out "subversive activities" in the federal government. His tactics received widespread attention from the press but ferreted out no communists. However, many of the government employees and private citizens who were called before his committee had their careers and reputations ruined.[28]

Few of his contemporaries publicly countered McCarthy's unsubstantiated charges. Outgoing Representative Woodhouse told the *New York Times*, "It is the job of every balanced, conscientious person to steer us away from the dangers of hysteria and to label as traitors those in public positions who attempt to gain personal benefit from playing on the fears of the masses of the people."[29] Margaret Chase Smith, a freshman Senator, directly challenged McCarthy in a Senate Floor speech that demonstrated great moral courage. In an address she later called her "Declaration of Conscience," Senator Smith said, "those of us who shout the loudest about Americanism . . . are all too frequently those who, by our own words and acts, ignore some of the basic principles of Americanism—the right to criticize; the right to hold unpopular beliefs; the right to protest; the right of independent thought." Although she did not mention McCarthy by name, her meaning was unmistakable. She also took her colleagues to task for condoning the permissive context in which

Communist-hunting Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin (center) confers with his two principal aides, G. David Schine (left) and Roy Cohn in this June 1954 photo. McCarthy came to prominence in February 1950 when he accused the State Department of being infiltrated by dozens of communists. In 1953, McCarthy became chairman of the Government Operations Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—a prime perch from which to pursue alleged communist activities in the U.S. government. McCarthy's sweeping and unsubstantiated accusations, carried widely by the press, produced no communists but ruined many careers and perpetuated public fears about domestic subversives.

IMAGE COURTESY OF AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

McCarthyism was allowed to flourish and in which Senate debate had been "debased to the level of a forum of hate and character assassination."[30] McCarthy's downfall came in the spring of 1954 when he investigated the U.S. Army in televised hearings; his ruthless and exaggerated tactics were broadcast to millions of viewers. In December 1954, the Senate censured McCarthy. Voting with the majority were his Republican colleagues Senator Smith and Senator Abel.

Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (left) and Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine on the set of the political television program Face the Nation *in Washington, D.C., on November 11, 1956. Both women were leading figures in the Democratic and Republican parties, respectively.*

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FDR LIBRARY/NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Crafting an Identity

Second-generation women in Congress legislated sporadically on issues of special importance to their gender and on the initiative of individuals rather than that of a group. The paucity of Congresswomen inhibited the development of a coherent women's-issues agenda until the 1970s. Few embraced a "feminist" agenda —preferring to work within the prescribed institutional channels.

There were exceptions, however. Congresswoman Winifred Stanley introduced the first equal-pay legislation in Congress, arguing that women and men should receive the same compensation for the same type of work. "Merit, regardless of sex, should be the basis of employment," Stanley said. "Jobs should be filled by those best qualified by ability, training and experience, with the consideration given to men and women of the armed services."[31] Unsuccessful equal pay measures were introduced repeatedly in the decades that followed, notably by Representative Kelly in 1951 and by Representative Cecil Harden of Indiana in 1957. Stanley, along with then-Representative Margaret Chase Smith, also renewed the drive for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1943 to mark the 20th anniversary of its introduction to Congress.

House veteran Mary Norton realized that there were not enough women in Congress to support such an agenda. In the months immediately following the war, she despaired that a quarter century after earning the vote, women had failed to organize as an effective political bloc. "We won't see a dozen women in Congress in our day because women won't vote for women," Norton lamented.[32] More than a dozen women did serve in the 83rd Congress, two years after Norton retired. But women did not consistently hold even two dozen seats in Congress (about 5 percent of the total membership) until the mid-1980s.

Chase Woodhouse, one of Norton's contemporaries, recalled that she and her women colleagues in the House earnestly pursued individual projects but did not reach a consensus on legislation about issues that were particularly relevant to women, namely, education, employment, childcare, reproductive rights, and health issues. Norton, Woodhouse observed, worked hard to minimize distinctions between women and men in everyday House activities, insisting that the men treat the women as "Congressmen"; there were no "ladies first" in the line for the elevator, and women Members would wear plain business suits and no "frillies" or hats on the House Floor. "None of us were women's women," Woodhouse recalled years later of colleagues like Emily Douglas, Helen Douglas, Sumner, and Luce.[33] Woodhouse secured federal money for programs and organizations that were important to women, particularly prenatal clinics and child welfare agencies.[34] Acutely concerned with helping women in the workplace, Woodhouse nevertheless distanced herself from vocal feminists. "I always say I never attack a brick wall," she observed years later. "I try to go around it, and the people who are defending

the other side are so surprised to see me that they even say, 'How do you do? What can I do for you?'"[35] Her colleague Frances Bolton chafed at the term "Congresswoman." "It doesn't exist" in the dictionary, she once snapped. "We've had Congressmen here for a good many generations. But we've never had Congresswomen. You're a woman Congressman. It's just like a chairman. Some people say chairwoman. But that's just silly."[36]

Importantly, however, a new legislative style for women in Congress was being pioneered by celebrities-turned-politicians—a "show horse," or publicity-driven style.[37] Capitalizing on their fame, Luce and Helen Douglas chose to become partisan champions of the issue *du jour* rather than to specialize in areas of legislative interest. Congresswoman Luce, a glamorous playwright, delivered the keynote address at the 1944 GOP National Convention; it was the first time a woman was accorded this honor by a major party.[38] Several weeks later, Douglas, an actress and a singer and the wife of film star Melvyn Douglas—then making her first run for the House—was featured prominently at the Democratic National Convention.[39] The energy these women derived from the intense media coverage of their House careers became part of their style. Reflecting late in life on her move to a career in politics, Douglas remarked, "I never felt I left the stage."[40] While neither Luce nor Douglas used this legislative style to advance a "women's-issues" agenda, later generations of women in Congress adopted their style to become public advocates for feminist concerns, particularly Bella Abzug of New York and, to a lesser degree, Martha Griffiths of Michigan and Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. In the late 1940s, California Congressman Jerry Voorhis marveled at the precarious balancing act of his women colleagues, who charted "a course midway between two fatal mistakes." Voorhis observed that "the woman member must take care that she does not base her appeal for the cause in which she is interested on the fact of her womanhood. She cannot expect chivalry from the male members when it comes to casting their votes. Neither, on the other hand, can she hope to gain a strong position for herself if she attempts the role of a hail fellow well met and tries to be like the men. What she has to do is to be simply a member of the House who quite incidentally happens to belong to the female sex."[41]

Institutional and cultural barriers added to the precariousness of women's new foothold in national political life. The Cold War, enduring paternalistic social patterns, and the temporary decline of feminist reform blunted women's drive for political power, leaving the third generation of Congresswomen—those elected from the 1950s to the early 1970s—to begin fundamentally altering the legislative landscape.

Accompanied by U.S. Marine officers, Senator Margaret Chase Smith tours a U.S. military facility. Smith was the first woman to serve on the Armed Services Committee in both the House and the Senate.

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NOTES

1 "Mrs. O'Day Pledges Opposition to War," 29 October 1934, *New York Times:* 4; "38 Women Run for House," 3 November 1936, *New York Times:* 9.

2 Allan G. Bogue, Jerome M. Clubb, Carroll R. McKibbin, and Santa A. Traugott, "Members of the House of Representatives and the Processes of Modernization, 1789–1960," *Journal of American History* 63 (September 1976): 275–302.

3 The standard biography of Eleanor Roosevelt is Blanche Wiesen Cook's *Eleanor Roosevelt,* two volumes (New York: Viking Press, 1992, 1999). For more on Roosevelt's connections to prominent women activists and politicians, see Lillian Faderman, *To Believe in Women* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

4 Gretchen Urnes Beito, *Coya Come Home: A Congresswoman's Journey* (Los Angeles and London: Pomegranate Press, Inc.): 65–66.

5 Committee attractiveness during this period is based on Charles Stewart III, "Committee Hierarchies in the Modernizing House, 1875–1947," *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (No. 4, November 1992): 835–856. At the beginning of this period, there were 47 House committees; the Senate had 33 standing committees (see, for example, committee listings in the *Congressional Directory* for the 75th Congress, 1st Session, 1937). The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 restructured the committee system. After its implementation in 1947, the number of standing House committees was reduced to 19 and standing Senate committees to 15. The process of streamlining was achieved by eliminating the number of panels altogether and by renaming, reconfiguring, or broadening the jurisdiction of others. Committee structure has been modified since 1947, with the addition of the Budget Committee in the early 1970s, and again after the Republicans came to power and enacted institutional reforms in 1995. Currently in the 109th Congress, the House and Senate have 20 and 16 permanent standing committees, respectively. The House also has the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. The Senate has three permanent select committees. In addition, House and Senate Members serve on four joint committees.

6 "Military Affairs Mrs. Luce's Post," 19 January 1943, *New York Times:* 21; "Urge House Women on War Committees," 15 January 1943, *New York Times:* 15.

7 Chase Going Woodhouse, Oral History Interview, U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress (hereinafter USAFMOC), Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: 225.

8 Woodhouse, USAFMOC, Oral History Interview: 237.

9 The New Deal policies enacted in the 1930s by the Roosevelt administration and Congress dominated American political life and were, in some measure, a culmination of the welfare and social work efforts that had engaged women for a century. Many New Deal programs benefited from the experience of women reformers of the Progressive Era. The professionalization and institutionalization of "1920s" women's reform groups, such as the League of Women Voters and the Women's Bureau in Labor Department, prepared women for having a voice within the administration. See, for example, Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890–1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

10 Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press, 1989): 202.

11 See, for example, William E. Leuchtenburg, "Franklin D. Roosevelt's Supreme Court 'Packing' Plan," in *Essays on the New Deal,* Harold M. Hollingsworth and William F. Holmes, eds. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969): 69–115.

12 See, for example, Wayne Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

13 Jessie Sumner, "We Are Right To Be Safe," Address to the Republican League of Women, 2 October 1939, reprinted in the *Congressional Record,* House, 76th Cong., 2nd sess. (2 October 1939): A 91–92.

14 Jessie Ash Arndt, "Rep. O'Day Offers Plan Against War," 15 July 1937, *Washington Post:* 19.

15 *Congressional Record,* House, 77th Cong., 1st sess. (11 December 1941): A 5565.

16 Norma Smith, *Jeannette Rankin: America's Conscience* (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 2002): 185.

17 David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 776.

18 These rising wartime employment statistics masked surprisingly resilient traditional views of women's place in society. The surge appears far less dramatic in light of the fact that about half these women had recently graduated from school and would have soon joined the workforce anyway. By 1947, moreover, women's participation in the national workforce had decreased to 28 percent. In addition, "Rosie the Riveter" was atypical; most women had secretarial or clerical jobs. While defense plants employed some two million women, the vast majority (95 percent) held unskilled positions. Ironically, few were riveters, since this position required specialized skills, and employers were hesitant to train women they expected to be temporary employees. Indeed, government propagandists and business made it abundantly clear to

women that their employment would end when the men returned from war. See Kennedy's discussion, *Freedom From Fear:* 776–782; also Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982): 276–277; 294; Rosalind Rosenberg, *Divided Lives: American Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Hill and Wag, 1992).

19 Annabel Paxton, *Women in Congress* (Richmond, VA: Deitz Press, 1945): 37; see also Norton's obituary from the 1959 *Current Biography.*

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27 *Congressional Record,* House, 80th Cong., 2nd sess. (18 May 1948): 6030–6031.

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33 Chase Going Woodhouse, oral history interview with Joyce Pendry, 31 January 1981, Center for Oral History and Women's Study Programs, University of Connecticut, Storrs: 63–69.

34 *"Chase Going Woodhouse," Current Biography, 1945* (New York: H. W. Wilson and Company, 1945): 690-692.; see also on the housing issues, *Congressional Record,* House, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (28 June 1946): 7894–7897; on the OPA and price controls see, *Congressional Record,* House, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (16 April 1946): 3798–3800; *Congressional Record*, House 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (17 April 1946): 3892–3893.

35 Chase Going Woodhouse, Oral History Interview, USAFMOC: 31.

36 Peggy Lampson, *Few Are Chosen: American Women in Political Life Today* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968): 33.

37 For more on the differences between the "work horse" and the "show horse" styles, see Donald R. Matthews, "The Folkways of the United States Senate: Conformity to Group Norms and Legislative Effectiveness," *American Political Science Review* 53 (December 1959): 1064–1089. The same pattern has been observed in the House; see Charles L. Clapp, *The Congressman: His Work As He Sees It* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964): 22–23. See also James L. Payne, "Show Horses and Work Horses in the United States House of Representatives," *Polity* 12 (Spring 1980): 428–456.

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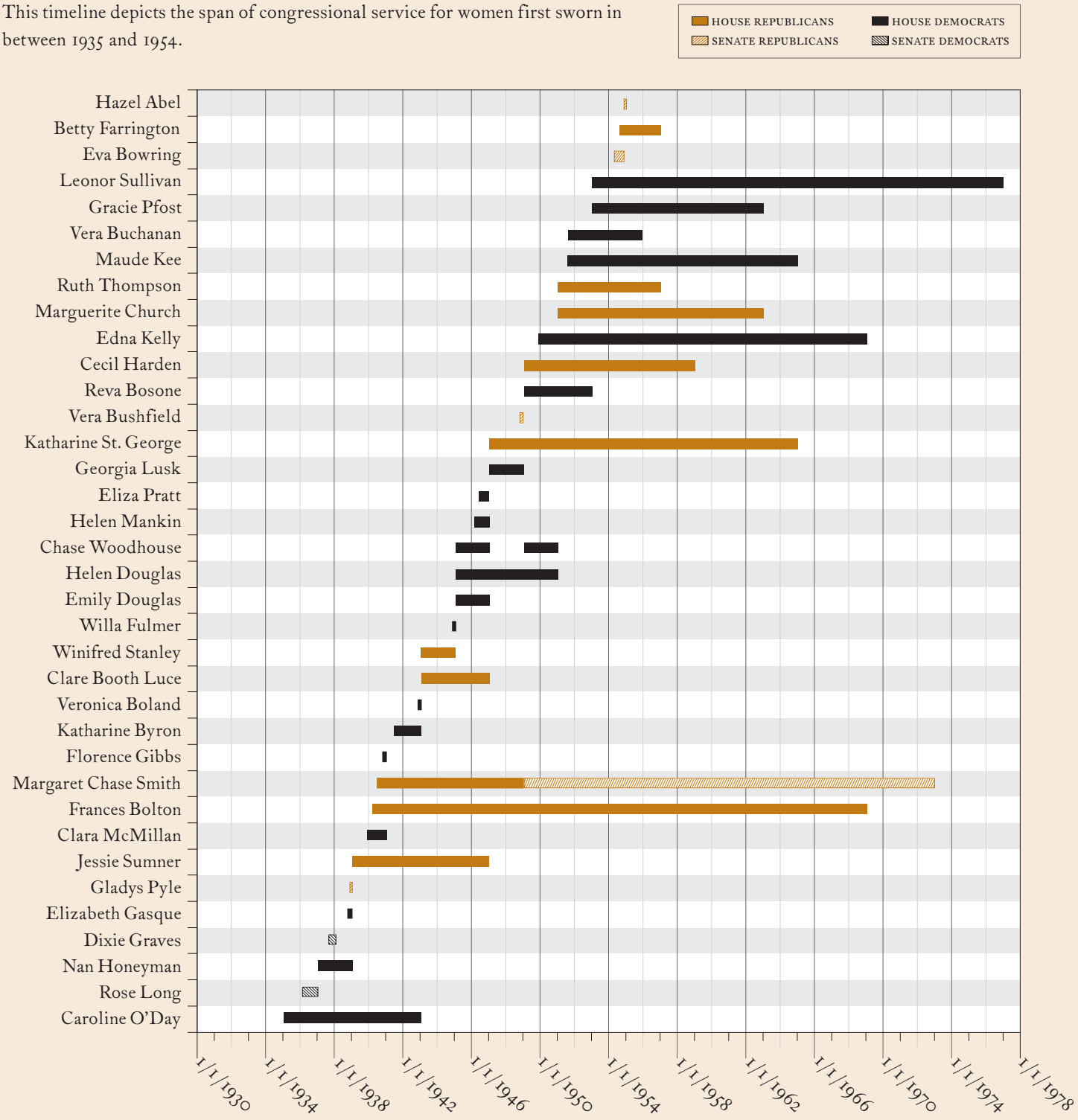
40 Ingrid Winther Scobie, *Center Stage: Helen Douglas, A Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995): 306.

41 Jerry Voorhis, *Confessions of a Congressman* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1947): 35.

Visual Statistics III

Congressional Service[1]

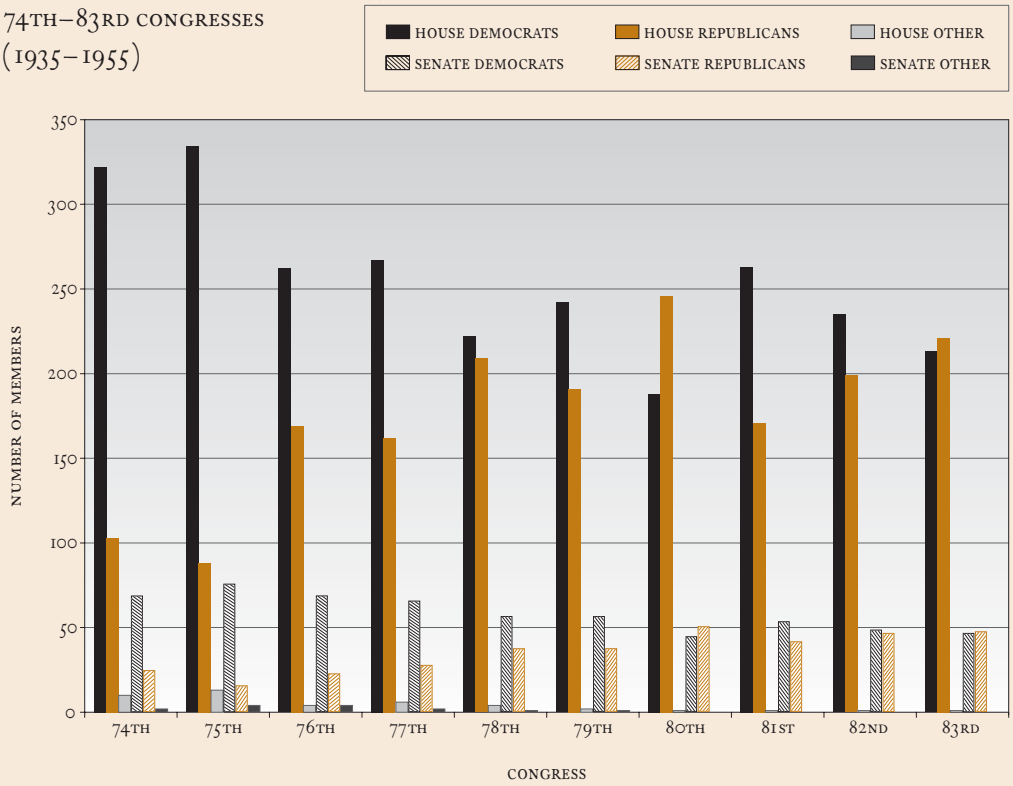
This timeline depicts the span of congressional service for women first sworn in between 1935 and 1954.



1. Source: *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–2005* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005); also available at http://bioguide.congress.gov.

House and Senate Party Affiliation[2]

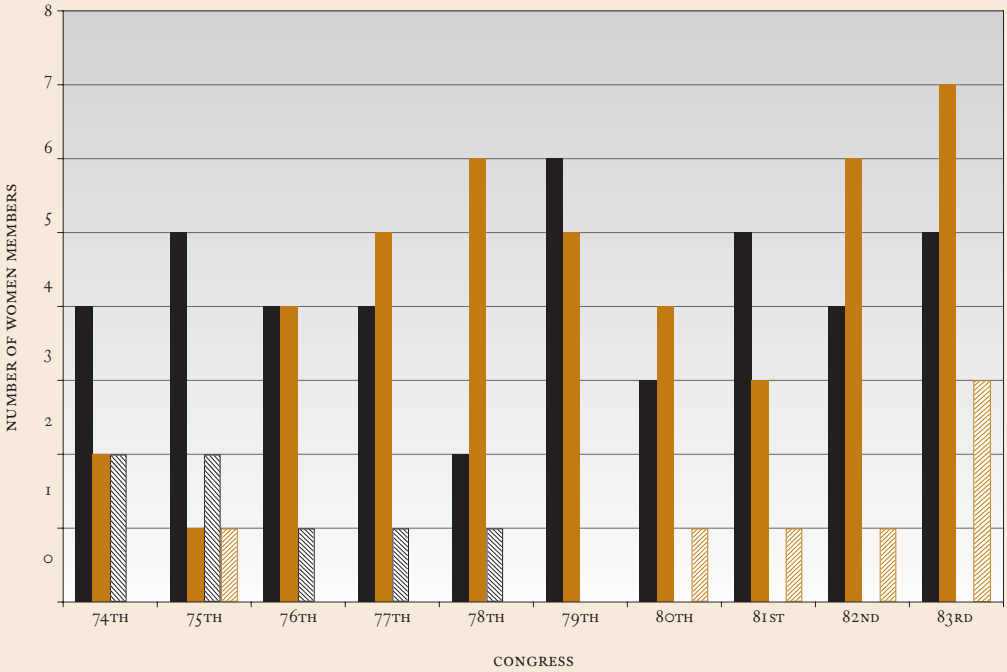
74TH–83RD CONGRESSES
(1935–1955)



This chart depicts the party affiliation of all Members of Congress from 1935 to 1955. The following chart depicts a party breakdown only for women Members during this time period.

Party Affiliation: Women in Congress

74TH–83RD CONGRESSES (1935–1955)



2. House numbers do not include Delegates or Resident Commissioners. Sources: Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives; U.S. Senate Historical Office.

Caroline O'Day
1875–1943

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK
1935–1943

A longtime suffragist with strong ties to New York politics and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Caroline O'Day was an unwavering supporter of New Deal legislation and a fervent pacifist during her four terms in the House. Once, when asked what she would do if the United States became embroiled in a war, she declared, "I would just kiss my children good-bye and start off for Leavenworth."[1] Those convictions changed, however, when O'Day realized the aims of Nazi Germany.

Caroline Love Goodwin was born on June 22, 1875, on a plantation in Perry, Georgia, daughter of Sidney Prior Goodwin and Elia Warren. Caroline Goodwin graduated from the elite Lucy Cobb Institute in Athens, Georgia, and for eight years studied art in Paris (with James McNeill Whistler), Munich, and Holland, and briefly at the Cooper Union. In 1902, she married Daniel T. O'Day, son of a Standard Oil Company executive, whom she met in Europe. They settled in Rye, New York, and had three children: Elia, Daniel, and Charles.

Caroline O'Day first became interested in politics after witnessing a suffrage parade with her husband, who turned to his wife and asked why she wasn't marching with the procession.[2] She later joined the Westchester (NY) League of Women Voters, where she became an officer and first met Eleanor Roosevelt. After the death of her husband in 1916, Caroline O'Day dedicated herself to improving the lives of working-class poor in the inner city. She served on the board of directors and volunteered at Lillian Wald's Henry Street Settlement on Manhattan's Lower East Side. A pacifist who opposed U.S. entry into World War I, O'Day became vice chair of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. In 1917, she joined Jeannette Rankin in support of the enfranchisement of New York women. Her first political appointment came in 1921 when New York Governor Alfred E. Smith named her to the state board of social welfare, supervising care for dependent juveniles. In 1923, O'Day became associate chair of the New York state Democratic Committee and directed its women's division—holding both positions until her death. She traversed New York, logging more than 8,000 miles with Eleanor Roosevelt and other women leaders to organize voters. As a reward, the party appointed her chair of the New York delegation to the 1924 Democratic National Convention.[3] Together, O'Day and Roosevelt led delegations of women to Albany to press the legislature to adopt Governor Smith's programs. She worked for Smith's presidential campaign in 1928 and for Franklin Roosevelt's successful 1932 campaign. After Roosevelt's inauguration, O'Day was named New York's director of the National Recovery Administration.

O'Day's 1934 race for one of two New York At-Large seats in the U.S. House of Representatives drew national attention because of the candidate's highly placed supporter: First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.[4] O'Day secured the nomination when Roosevelt allies ousted the first-term incumbent, John Fitzgibbon (former mayor of Oswego) from the ticket, citing his insufficient support for New Deal initiatives.[5] Eleanor Roosevelt backed O'Day and, in the process, became the first First Lady to actively campaign for a congressional candidate—making a half dozen speeches and even chairing her campaign committee.[6] GOP leaders were incensed at the break with tradition and labeled O'Day as a "Yes" vote for the Roosevelt administration. Eleanor Roosevelt defended her actions on personal and political grounds.[7] "I am doing this as an

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individual," she said. "I believe in certain things, and . . . I feel I am justified in making this effort in my own state, because I know its problems."[8]

While Republicans howled at Eleanor Roosevelt's involvement, O'Day's principal opponent, Nyack lawyer Natalie F. Couch, refused to go on the attack and stuck to a vague nine-point platform that promised to fight unemployment and support "humane" public relief programs while balancing the federal budget.[9] O'Day's platform stressed better wages and working conditions for laborers, strong support for federal intervention to relieve the effects of the Great Depression, and the need to involve women in local and national government.[10] O'Day also tapped into a state network of Democratic women's groups and arranged for prominent national women's figures to canvass New York on her behalf. Self-styled as the "Flying Squadron," the group included such luminaries as the aviator Amelia Earhart (O'Day's Rye neighbor), Elizabeth Wheeler (daughter of Montana Senator Burton K. Wheeler), and Josephine Roche, a prominent Colorado politician.[11] O'Day topped a slate of 12 candidates with 27.6 percent of the vote, just barely ahead of Democrat Matthew J. Merritt and only a few percentage points in front of Couch. O'Day's platform had broad appeal for Depression-Era New Yorkers: "Higher standards for wage earners, adequate relief at lowest cost to the taxpayer, a sound policy, and wider opportunity for women in government."[12] The GOP ran women candidates in the next three elections in unsuccessful attempts to unseat O'Day. None could close O'Day's and Merritt's several-hundred-thousand-vote margins.[13]

Once in the House, O'Day received assignments on the Immigration and Naturalization Committee and on the Insular Affairs Committee. She also chaired the Committee on Election of President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress from 1937 to 1943. She, along with Mary T. Norton and Isabella S. Greenway was one of the most popular and recognizable women in Congress. O'Day's trademark was her collection of hand fans. Known as "The Lady of the Fans", she carried them into committee hearings and onto the House Floor.[14]

Congresswoman O'Day's first passion was the pursuit of world peace. Her affiliation with the group World Peaceways, led O'Day to propose several measures she believed would deter world conflict: the adoption of a national referendum to allow voters to decide for or against a war; federal government control of the arms industry; and a government-backed educational campaign about the horrors of war. Women played a particularly important role in the protest movement, O'Day noted, because as mothers they "pay the first and greatest cost of war."[15] She represented the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at the International Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1936.[16] She was concerned with the prospect of "total war," in which civilian targets—urban and industrial, in particular—were as important to strategists as traditional military targets. The Spanish Civil War, then raging in Spain, as well as Japanese and Nazi tactics in the opening years of World War II, would confirm O'Day's fears. O'Day urged that the U.S. and other nations adopt a "standard of ethics" that would outlaw mass killings.[17]

O'Day's work extended beyond pacifist principles. National security, she observed, derived from stable domestic life.[18] She was a staunch supporter of the New Deal and looked to advance the cause of labor and children's issues. O'Day's first major legislative victory was in winning the delay of the deportation of 2,600 immigrants (many of them with dependents who had citizenship rights in the U.S.), pending a thorough review by Congress.[19] She helped attach a child labor amendment to the 1936 Walsh–Healy Act, which set employment standards for federal contracts, and to the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, which fixed minimum wages for employment. The Congresswoman also called for a dramatic expansion of the government's aid to the dependent children program, which she described as a "national investment."[20] In 1940, O'Day urged colleagues to adopt federal aid programs for migrant workers, especially for children of migrants, who often toiled in the fields alongside their parents.[21] O'Day also fought to keep funding

for federal arts projects in theater, music, and writing, initiated by the Works Progress Administration.[22]

Representative O'Day consistently championed progressive civil rights causes. She supported an antilynching bill that came before Congress in 1935, noting that "I have been interested in the efforts Southern women have been making to curb this horrible thing."[23] She backed a 1937 version of the bill that passed the House. She also criticized the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1939 when they refused to allow African-American singer Marian Anderson to perform at Constitution Hall. In 1939, O'Day opposed legislation to create detention camps for aliens, a plan that foreshadowed later wartime internment camps for Japanese Americans. She derided the bill as "a negation of every idea and policy and principle that our country holds dear."[24] Her suffrage background and her tireless work on behalf of underrepresented minorities, however, did not translate into support for an equal rights amendment. Like many of her women colleagues, O'Day publicly rejected the idea, fearing that it would undermine protective laws she had helped implement for single women and working mothers in the labor force.[25]

Her pacifist views threatened to bring her into open conflict with the Roosevelt administration as America's entry into World War II grew imminent. O'Day opposed modification of the Neutrality Acts to authorize arms sales to nations at war with Nazi Germany and voted against the 1940 Selective Training and Service Act. She lashed out against the U.S. military as the "most powerful lobby in the nation."[26] Eventually, however, when Nazi forces overran Western Europe and intensified atrocities against Jews and other minorities in Germany and the occupied countries, O'Day changed her position. She supported increased armaments for the American military. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Congress voted overwhelmingly to declare war on Japan. O'Day, who by that time suffered from a chronic long-term illness, was absent for the vote. She later told House colleagues that, had she been present, she would have voted for the war resolution. "Japan, Germany, and Italy have decided the issue of peace or war," O'Day said.[27]

Poor health brought O'Day's career to a premature end. Her 1940 election had been carried on largely by her daughter, Elia, who made campaign appearances for her convalescing mother. O'Day declined to run for a fifth term in 1942, after she suffered complicating injuries from a fall. She was succeeded by Republican Winnifred Stanley, who prevailed against Democratic candidate Flora Dufour Johnson in the 1942 general elections. O'Day died on January 4, 1943, a day after the end of her congressional service.

"Women will no longer consent to war. There is no problem affecting humanity that cannot be settled without recourse to the battlefield."

—Caroline O'Day, International Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1936

In 1939, O'Day opposed legislation to create detention camps for aliens, a plan that foreshadowed later wartime internment camps for Japanese Americans. She derided the bill as "a negation of every idea and policy and principle that our country holds dear."

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Rose McConnell Long
1892–1970

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ DEMOCRAT FROM LOUISIANA
1936–1937

Rose Long emerged from behind the long shadow of her flamboyant husband, the slain Louisiana populist Huey P. Long, to fill his Senate seat for an abbreviated term. Accompanied by her children, Long diligently assumed her husband's committee duties while, in Baton Rouge, the shattered remnants of the Long political machine vied for a permanent successor.

Rose McConnell was born in Greensburg, Indiana, on April 8, 1892. She was the first child born to Peter McConnell, a farmer, and Sally B. McConnell, who came from a long line of southern planters. The McConnell family moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1901, where Rose attended the public schools and later became a local schoolteacher. In 1910, she entered a cake baking contest with a "bride loaf cake." One of the judges, a traveling salesman who had sponsored the contest to pitch the lard substitute he was selling, was named Huey Pierce Long. Rose McConnell won the contest, struck up a long correspondence with the itinerant Long, and, in 1913, in Memphis, Tennessee, she married him. The Longs moved to New Orleans, where Rose worked as a secretary to pay Huey's way through the Tulane Law School. After finishing a three-year program in seven months, he was admitted to the bar in 1915. Rose Long put her stenography skills to use on behalf of her husband's early political campaigns and served as a political adviser. Meanwhile she raised their three children: Rose, Russell, and Palmer. In 1928, after serving on the state railroad commission, Huey Long was elected Louisiana governor. As the state's political boss, he introduced sweeping legislation that ushered in large public works programs. Two years later, he won election to the U.S. Senate where, in the early years of the Depression, he gained a large populist following of farmers and laborers who rallied around his "Share the Wealth" initiative.

Rose Long distanced herself from her husband's political work during his years as governor, though she remained supportive.[1] Unlike her egomaniacal husband, Rose shied from the spotlight and served as the anchor for her young family. She was so unobtrusive as Louisiana's First Lady as to be largely unknown to many of her husband's constituents. While Long traveled in large caravans and constantly in the company of bodyguards, Rose Long routinely drove the family car on long trips with the children, recalling that she occasionally stopped to pick up hitchhikers, whom she and her daughter would pepper with questions about politics without revealing their identities.[2]

Huey Long's political ambitions stretched all the way to the White House. He won election as Louisiana governor by tapping into voter discontent with conservative rule and pledging a tax-the-rich program. In the Senate, he eventually charged that FDR's New Deal programs had been co-opted by conservative business interests. In the fall 1932 elections, as a jab at his chief Senate rival, Long led a last-minute campaign blitz in Arkansas to help elect Hattie Caraway, who bucked the political establishment by refusing to retire after a brief appointment to succeed her late husband. With Long's help, she won a full six-year term. Huey Long became a national figure in opposition to FDR with his "Share the Wealth" program, which called for a radical redistribution of wealth to afford every American a decent standard of living. By 1935, he was a serious contender for the presidency.[3]

Long had made a host of enemies. On September 8, 1935, the Senator was shot while visiting the Louisiana

IMAGE COURTESY OF LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

state capitol and died early on the morning of September 10th. The scramble to name a successor to the "Kingfish" made for pure political spectacle throughout the fall of 1935. Long organization leaders settled on a slate of candidates for the January 21, 1936, primary and the April 21, 1936, special election. Governor O.K. Allen, Long's successor, was nominated to fill out the remainder of Long's Senate term, set to expire in January 1937. Meanwhile, the speaker of the Louisiana state house of representatives, Allen Ellender, was chosen to run for the succeeding six-year term. Richard W. Leche was named as the gubernatorial candidate, and Earl Long, Huey's brother, displaced Acting Lieutenant Governor James A. Noe on the ticket. But the plan crumbled from the top down. Governor Allen died before the primary, and Noe, his slighted subordinate, succeeded him for a four-month term.[4]

Though snubbed by the Long organization, Noe had been one of the Kingfish's closest protégés. He bypassed Ellender and chose Long's widow, Rose, to succeed her husband. In making his announcement on January 31, 1936, Noe crowed, "It is the happiest moment of my life." He also promised Rose Long that she would receive unanimous backing from state party leaders—which she soon did. To the press, he was more mellifluous: "The love of Huey Long binds us together as a solid Gibraltar. . . we're united and there isn't a hint of dissension in the party."[5]

Critics charged Noe with "political trickery" and attempting to advance his own ambitions for national office. Newspapers speculated that Rose Long was a mere compromise candidate who would hold the seat until a victor emerged from the swamp of Louisiana politics. The *Washington Post* denounced the move as destructive to the advancement of women in politics because it seemed to advance a family political dynasty rather than democratic interests. "Women have as much right as men to seek and fill political office," the editors wrote. "But every time a woman is elevated to a position of great influence merely for sentimental reasons it becomes more difficult for those who are really trained for effective public work to win recognition." Remembering Caraway's election, they further noted, "The fact that the two women now in the Senate owe their positions largely to Huey Long is a tragic commentary upon the success of the feminist movement."[6]

On February 10, 1936, Rose Long was sworn into the Senate and took a seat alongside Hattie Caraway at the back of the chamber. Upon taking office, she received credentials made out to "Mrs. Huey Pierce Long," which she insisted be changed to "Rose McConnell Long." After the ceremony, at which Vice President John Nance Garner administered the oath of office before virtually the entire Senate and packed galleries, Long got right down to business, attending a floor speech on U.S.– Japanese relations. She told reporters that she intended to carry on her husband's "Share the Wealth" programs. "I am having all of our files and records sent up, and will study them before making any announcements. I am 100 percent for labor and the farmers, and will vote for everything to help them."[7] Long settled into several suites in a hotel on Connecticut Avenue in the northwest part of the city—the same hotel that Huey had occupied. She also brought her daughter, Rose, and youngest son, Palmer, to stay with her in Washington. On April 21, 1936, Rose Long won the special election to serve the remainder of her husband's term. With a sparse crowd in the gallery that included Rose and several schoolmates, she was sworn in a second time on May 19, 1936.

Senator Long's daughter, Rose, whom she brought to Washington, was more than just a supportive family member. The younger Rose possessed the political acumen to help her mother, who was sometimes awkward in public-speaking situations, adjust to her new role. The daughter first had urged her mother to accept the nomination because, she recalled, it seemed "the right thing to do."[8] The immediate family members believed that Russell was best equipped to eventually carry out his father's work—and eventually he would, serving as Louisiana Senator from 1948 to 1987 and chairing the Finance Committee. Huey, Rose, and Russell were the only father-mother-child combination in Senate history. In later years, despite her apparent abilities, the younger Rose Long did not enter public service.[9]

Though her husband's term did not expire until January 3, 1937, Rose Long's stint as a Senator was further abbreviated when the second (and final) session of the 74th Congress (1935–1937) adjourned on June 20, 1936—four months after she came to Washington. She worked hard during that stint, however, preferring the routine of committee work to the public forum of the Senate Chamber. In stark contrast to her husband, Rose Long shied from the limelight and made few floor speeches. She fit comfortably into the committee work that Huey Long often neglected. Rose Long received five assignments: Claims, Immigration, Interoceanic Canals, Post Offices and Post Roads, and Public Lands and Surveys. Her efforts on the Committee on Public Lands led to the enlargement of Chalmette National Historic Park on the site of the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812. "Had we not won the battle," she said in one of her rare speeches, "we would have a British Colony west of the Mississippi." [10] In March of 1936, she joined her Louisiana colleague, John H. Overton, and the Senators from Arkansas and Texas to seek authorization of the attendance of the Marine Band at the centennial celebration in Arkansas and Texas and at the 46th Confederate Reunion in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Long's brief Senate career, so representative of her behind-the-scenes approach to life, fit the pattern of her postpolitical life. She made few floor speeches and quietly left the Senate when the 74th Congress adjourned on January 3, 1937, and Allen Ellender, who had won the general election, succeeded her. Rose Long retired to private life in Shreveport. On May 27, 1970, she died in Boulder, Colorado, where, after a long illness, she had gone to live with her daughter.

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Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge, LA), Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections. *Papers:* Items are scattered throughout the Huey Long collections. Finding aids are available in the repository.

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Nan Wood Honeyman
1881–1970

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM OREGON
1937–1939

A Roosevelt family friend and New Deal stalwart, Nan Wood Honeyman of Oregon won election to the House of Representatives during the 1936 landslide re-election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. As an unreconstructed supporter of the President, Honeyman experienced the promises and pitfalls of hitching her political wagon to executive programs that did not always rest well with her constituents.

Nan Wood was born in West Point, New York, on July 15, 1881. Her father was Charles Erskine Scott Wood, Indian fighter, poet, and former adjutant of the United States Military Academy. In 1883, he resigned from the army and moved his family to Portland, Oregon. "Nanny" attended private schools and graduated from St. Helen's Hall in 1898. She later attended the Finch School in New York City for three years, where she studied music and established a lifelong friendship with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1907, she married David Taylor Honeyman, secretary-treasurer of the Honeyman Hardware Company in Portland, and they raised three children: Nancy, David, and Judith. David Honeyman, whom his wife described as a "Roosevelt Republican," was supportive of her nascent political career though he was determined to "keep my wife's politics out of my business."[1]

Nan Honeyman became active in local and state politics in her late 40s as an anti-Prohibition activist. Though a teetotaler herself, Honeyman rejected the idea that "any law governing people's personal conduct should be a part of the Constitution."[2] In 1928, she became head of the Oregon division of the Women's National Organization for Prohibition Reform. Two years later, she aligned with liberal interests in the state and became vice chair of the Oregon Democratic Committee. The party asked her to run for Congress in 1930 as Portland's U.S. Representative. It was a testament to what party leaders believed Honeyman's potential was as a vote getter. Since the district was created through reapportionment in 1912, only one Democrat had ever won election there and, then, only for a single term. Honeyman declined the offer but campaigned actively for the eventual Democratic candidate, General Charles H. Martin. Martin won election to two consecutive terms. In 1933, Honeyman served as president of the state constitutional convention which ratified the 21st Amendment, repealing Prohibition. A year later, when Martin won election as Oregon governor, party leaders again prevailed on Honeyman to run for the Portland seat. She again declined, according to one newspaper account, because she was apprehensive about her lack of experience in elective office.[3] She instead campaigned for and won a seat in the Oregon house of representatives. Honeyman later served as a delegate to the Democratic national conventions of 1936 and 1940.

In 1936, Honeyman challenged freshman incumbent Republican William A. Ekwall in the race for the Portland seat. Honeyman embraced the New Deal platform of President Roosevelt and supported the plan championed by Eleanor Roosevelt and Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, which called for a pension drawn from taxing an individual's lifetime income. Honeyman refused to endorse a competing proposal—the so-called Townshend Plan. Francis Townshend, a California doctor, had advocated "universal" old-age pensions of $200 per month to every American 65 years or older. A faction of the Democratic Party, "Townshendites," ran John A. Jefferey as an Independent candidate after Honeyman scooped up the nomination.[4] Honeyman held two

IMAGE COURTESY OF OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

advantages, in particular: a strong network of women's groups from her anti-Prohibition work and a door-to-door campaign style. Honeyman visited Portland factories to talk with workers on their lunch breaks. She canvassed the city, walking block by block to speak with housewives and retirees. "Don't ever think that the day of personal campaigning is past," Honeyman declared. "Voters want to know who is representing them. And women running for office can overcome much masculine prejudice by meeting the men voters face to face."[5] At the 1936 Philadelphia convention, she gained valuable publicity by seconding FDR's nomination. In a state where two-thirds of voters preferred FDR to Republican Alf Landon in the fall elections, Honeyman benefited from presidential coattails. She captured 53 percent of the vote, while Ekwall, her closest competitor, managed only 31 percent.[6] She became the first woman to represent Oregon in Congress. Honeyman's youngest daughter, 20-year-old Judith, came to work for her mother in Washington.[7]

On January 4, 1937, when Honeyman took the oath of office she told a reporter that she intended to "keep my eyes and ears open and my mouth shut," during the first session.[8] She largely fulfilled that pledge. During her House service, Honeyman staunchly supported the New Deal. She was assigned to three committees: Indian Affairs, Irrigation and Reclamation, and Rivers and Harbors. The latter assignment was a valuable one, considering the port business of her district. Honeyman supported a range of federal programs that benefited her constituents. She voted for a resolution to continue loans to farmers in 1937 for crop production and harvesting, noting that about 10,000 Oregon farmers had benefited from the program since Roosevelt had taken office.[9] Honeyman supported the President's neutrality policies, including the 1937 Neutrality Act, which created a "cash and carry" program whereby belligerents could purchase strategic goods in the U.S. and ship them back on non-American carriers. She was uncomfortable, however, with America becoming an arsenal for Atlantic allies. U.S. security, she declared, might be "accomplished more effectively and quickly by concentrating our naval and military programs to this end and by eliminating all phases of that program which might constitute needless preparation for aggressive warfare."[10] In 1938, Honeyman sponsored a bill authorizing the federal government to acquire lands along the Columbia River on which to build a large naval port and air base. Referred to the Naval Affairs Committee, it did not pass.[11]

But for all Honeyman's connections and her key committee post, she seemed a bit adrift in Washington. Her forays onto the House Floor were infrequent, and her legislative interests were eclectic, ranging from strengthening the nation's defenses to proposing that the federal government create a national award for poetry. Honeyman seemed at times curiously aloof to the interests of her district's constituents. For instance, during Irrigation and Reclamation Committee debate over appropriations for the completion and operation of the Bonneville Dam along the Columbia River, she often deferred from delivering her opinion, noting only that she unreservedly supported whatever actions President Roosevelt recommended. The Bonneville Dam was one of the great public works projects of the New Deal. Construction commenced in 1933, and by its completion five years later, the dam, combined with its system of locks, promised to open navigation along vast stretches of the Columbia River (with its mouth at the Pacific in Portland) and to generate electricity for large swaths of the Northwest. Honeyman did weigh in on the nascent issues of private versus public power, fighting to make a greater share of the hydroelectric power generated by the Bonneville Dam available to publicly owned cooperatives. To that end, Congresswoman Honeyman fought for congressional funding for more transmission lines to meet the projected increase in demand for power from the facility.[12] In an effort to limit the role of private utility companies, Honeyman also sought to keep Bonneville's power-generating function securely under the oversight of the Interior Department.[13]

The critical turning point for the freshman Representative seems to have been her unflinching support for Roosevelt in the midst of the "court-packing" fight in 1937, when the President sought to create a Supreme Court more favorable

to his New Deal programs. Critics accused FDR of undermining the independence of the judiciary. In support of Roosevelt's plan, Honeyman mailed out a mimeographed letter to constituents. She declared her allegiance to FDR, telling voters in her district that she would not oppose the President's effort "to liberalize the judiciary." Pouncing on this episode, critics described Honeyman as a "stencil for the White House duplicating machine."[14]

When Honeyman ran for re-election in 1938, she beat William J. Pendergast, Jr., by a wide margin in the Democratic primary. But in the general election she faced a formidable candidate—liberal Republican Homer D. Angell. Trained as a lawyer, Angell was in the state senate after three terms in the Oregon house of representatives and enjoyed wide name recognition in Portland. Despite the Roosevelt administration's efforts to aid her re-election—the First Lady endorsed Honeyman in her syndicated newspaper column and Interior Secretary Harold Ickes, who admired the Congresswoman's stand on public power, stumped on her behalf during the campaign's home stretch—Honeyman lost to Angell by a thin margin of about 2,500 votes, 51 to 49 percent.[15] Overall, Democrats lost 78 congressional seats in the 1938 mid-term elections. In 1940, Honeyman again challenged Angell with the support of Eleanor Roosevelt. However, with two Independent candidates drawing off about 4,000 votes, Angell won re-election by a slender margin, about 3,000 votes, or less than two percent of the total turnout.

After Congress, Honeyman stayed active in politics and government. From August 1941 to May 1942 she was the senior Pacific Coast representative of the Office of Price Administration. In late 1941, she also was appointed by the Multnomah County commissioners to fill a vacant seat for a brief term in the Oregon state senate, but she resigned several months later. Honeyman's loyalty to the Roosevelt administration was rewarded when FDR appointed her the collector of customs in the 29th District, Portland, in May 1942. She served in that position for 11 years, retiring in July 1953. Honeyman moved to Woodacre, California, in the mid-1960s and died there on December 10, 1970.

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Dixie Bibb Graves
1882–1965

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ DEMOCRAT FROM ALABAMA
1937–1938

Dixie Bibb Graves, the first woman to serve in Congress from Alabama, came to Washington through an unusual route. When President Franklin Roosevelt surprised the country by nominating Senator Hugo Black to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1937, Alabama Governor Bibb Graves provoked a storm of criticism by naming his 55-year-old wife, Dixie Bibb Graves, to fill the Senate seat. "She has as good a heart and head as anybody," the governor told the press.[1]

Dixie Bibb was born on July 26, 1882, on a plantation near Montgomery, Alabama, to Payton and Isabel Bibb. The family was long associated with Alabama politics. Two of her ancestors had served as the first and second state governors. Dixie was raised with an orphaned cousin, Bibb Graves, and the two married in 1900 after Bibb Graves graduated from Harvard University and was serving as a state legislator. Although Dixie Graves's political power was clearly derivative, she boasted a long career in state and regional women's clubs, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs. From 1915 to 1917, while her husband served overseas in the army, she was president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. She also campaigned for women's suffrage in Alabama. Bibb Graves was governor twice, 1927–1931 and 1935–1939; Alabama's constitution prohibited consecutive terms in the statehouse.[2] Dixie Graves was comfortable enough on the stump to fill in for her husband, beginning with the 1934 campaign. Press accounts described her as a woman who was "at home with deep-sea fishing tackle, a shotgun, a garden spade, or a silver ladle at the banquet table." She also was credited with drafting some of her husband's speeches and influencing key decisions. Her campaign skills impressed enough people that she was mentioned as a potential gubernatorial candidate for 1938.[3]

Governor Graves's appointment of his wife in August 1937 provoked great controversy, but it also made political sense. Alabama, like other southern states at the time, was dominated by the Democratic Party, and power within the party was divided among local organizations and machines. Senator Hugo Black's departure for the Supreme Court had presented Governor Graves with an unexpected problem. The state constitution precluded Graves from filling the Senate vacancy himself, and there was an impressive list of viable claimants to the seat, each representing a substantial political constituency or faction in the state. One historian listed a former U.S. Senator, five U.S. Representatives, a state senator, an industrialist, and a lawyer as likely appointment prospects. [4] For Graves, described by associates as "a natural-born dealer," to appoint his wife meant that he did not have to choose among political factions within the state; he had left it to the voters to choose.[5] In addition, Dixie Graves's income as a Senator would be a welcome addition: the Senate rate was twice the governor's salary.[6]

Dixie Graves's appointment, however, was opposed by women's groups, newspapers, and many Alabama constituents. "In the Senate of the United States, where matters of such grave importance arise as to try the ability (and the souls) of veterans of many years, there is no place for a woman appointee unless her past experience would justify such action," one woman wrote to a Birmingham newspaper.[7] The *Birmingham Age-Herald* judged the governor's decision "repellent to the point of being offensive."[8]

Dixie Graves was sworn in before the Senate on August 20, 1937, days before the first session of the 75th Congress

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(1937–1939) ended.[9] She was seated in the "Cherokee Strip," the row of Democratic desks that took up the last row on the Republican side of the aisle due to the large Democratic majority. Graves suspected the seating was meant to send a message. "I'm supposed to be seen, perhaps," she said in a radio talk, "but certainly not heard."[10] During her five months in office she served on the Committee on Claims, the Committee on Education and Labor, and the Committee on Mines and Mining. In the Senate, she was not able to capitalize on her organizational background—she was regarded by her colleagues for what she was: an interim appointee, without her own political base and without a future. Her political acumen, however, stood her in good stead. When controversy broke out over revelations that her predecessor, Justice Hugo Black, had belonged to the Ku Klux Klan, she refrained from commenting on the issue. "That has nothing to do with me or with my office," she said.[11] "After a good look, shocked Washingtonians decided that Governor Graves could have made a worse appointment," *Time* soon reported.[12] During her brief Senate service Dixie Graves compiled a near-perfect attendance record and supported New Deal programs.[13]

For her part Senator Graves gained celebrity for her maiden Senate speech of November 19, 1937, during the southern filibuster against the Wagner–Van Nuys Anti-Lynching Bill. Originally, no one expected Graves to have a chance at participating much in Washington, but President Roosevelt had called a special session of Congress that fall. When she arrived back in the Capitol, she was anticipating supporting the administration in aiding farmers and expanding wage and hours benefits.[14] Instead, she found herself facing an angry Senate roiled during this filibuster. "I abhor lynching," she stated repeatedly as she related a brief history of lynching. "Mr. President, I rejoice, too, that in the South the constituted authorities, diligent about their business and strengthened by public opinion, are banishing the crime of lynching." She observed that lynchings had fallen by two-thirds during the previous decade, and she suggested that the crime would disappear in another few years. Graves concluded that there was no compelling reason for federal intervention in a local law-enforcement issue: "surely only a compelling emergency should cause this body to strike down the sovereignty of an indestructible State and utilize the forces of the Federal Government to insure law and order. No such emergency exists. The problem is being solved." The appearance of the bill before the Senate, she judged, was not due to political maneuverings. If neither the facts nor political advantage had brought the bill before the Senate, she blamed the media. "When one case of lynching occurs in the South, the press of these United States blazons that fact forth throughout the length and breadth of the land, and in all of its details it reiterates all of the circumstances, and harps on the same thing so long that the average person in remote sections who himself does not know the truth is very apt to believe that an isolated case is a typical one," she said. Observers in the Senate Gallery said they saw tears in her eyes as Senator Graves appealed to her colleagues to defeat the bill. After her speech, Senators from both parties gathered around to congratulate her.[15]

Graves's speech evoked strong support in the South. "It was a hit," reported the *Washington Herald*.[16] "SHE SPOKE AS A DAUGHTER OF THE DEEP SOUTH" blared the *Montgomery Advertiser*.[17] The *Washington Post* pronounced the speech one of the best on the subject, making Graves the session's best "surprise."[18] While northern newspapers denounced Graves's remarks, Governor Graves distributed 10,000 copies of the speech throughout Alabama and bragged to reporters that he was "prouder than ever of my appointment and appointee. She's won her spurs by herself without help from anyone. She didn't need any."[19] Dixie Graves's popularity in Alabama rose to such an extent that a write-in campaign was started to elect her to the Senate seat. She made it very clear, though, that she was not interested. "I would not consider serving here for any protracted length of time," she said. "My husband's work keeps him in Alabama, and I want to be there."[20] Representative Lister Hill won the special election on January 4, 1938, defeating former Senator J. Thomas Heflin.

On January 10, 1938, Graves resigned from the Senate so that her husband might appoint Hill to the seat immediately. This customary practice provided added seniority for Hill over those Senators who would be first elected in November 1938. In a farewell floor speech, Graves took special care to thank her lone female colleague, Senator Hattie Caraway of Arkansas. "I am grateful indeed, to my fellow woman Senator, a woman who, though she first came to the Senate by appointment, yet has made such a name for herself and for womanhood that her own people have honored her with election to this great office," Graves noted, "and I do devoutly hope that in time to come their example will be followed in other states."[21] Senate Democratic Leader Alban Barkley added "no Senator, whether man or woman, who has come into this body in recent years, has made a more favorable impression." Barkley went on to add, "the Senator from Alabama has conducted herself with dignity and poise, with an intelligent and alert interest. . . ."[22]

Back in Alabama, Dixie Graves resumed her civic activities while taking on new causes, such as the United Service Organization (USO), the American Red Cross, and a statewide recruitment drive for the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps during World War II. She also became the state advisor to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.[23] When her husband died in 1942 while campaigning for a third term as governor, she did not step up to take his place. Bibb Graves had crafted a very personal political machine that did not survive his death.[24] While she was in Washington, Dixie Graves had put limits on her political future. "I have always been interested in public affairs and will continue to be, but I am not a candidate for office," she had said in 1937.[25] Dixie Graves remained active in local civic activities until her death in Montgomery, Alabama, on January 21, 1965.

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Elizabeth H. Gasque
1886–1989

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA
1938–1939

Elizabeth Hawley Gasque, the first woman U.S. Representative from South Carolina, carried on a lifelong love affair with Washington's social scene. The death of her husband, Representative Allard Gasque, briefly added a political dimension to her activities. "She was a Congressman's wife 20 years and a Congressman's widow," one journalist wrote in 1939, "who wound up his affairs and took care of his district as though it were her life's work."[1] Thereafter, she never broke her ties to the city.

She was born Elizabeth "Bessie" Mills Hawley near Blythewood, South Carolina, on February 26, 1886, daughter of John Meade and Emina Nelson Entzminger Hawley. Bessie Hawley was a member of the southern aristocracy and spent her childhood on the expansive "Rice Creek" plantation, which covered 4,000 acres.[2] She attended the South Carolina Coeducational Institute in Edgefield, South Carolina, and graduated with a degree in expression (drama) from Greenville Female College (now Furman University) in 1907. She married Allard H. Gasque, a teacher and school administrator, in 1907, and they had four children: Elizabeth, Doris, John, and Thomas.[3] Bessie Gasque became interested in politics through her social connections. Later she would boast that she had been personally acquainted with every President from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt.[4] In 1923, Allard Gasque won election to the first of eight terms as a U.S. Representative from South Carolina, eventually becoming the chairman of the Committee on Pensions and a champion of war veterans and their dependents.[5] It was during her husband's congressional service that Bessie Gasque fell in love with Washington, plunging into the social scene. She became one of the regular hosts of an annual ball to raise funds to fight polio, held on President Franklin Roosevelt's birthday. Washington became her "natural home."[6]

Chairman Gasque entered Walter Reed Hospital in Washington in May 1938 and died there on June 17, the day after the 75th Congress (1937–1939) adjourned.[7] At the time of his death, Gasque was unopposed for re-election. The district encompassed eight counties in northeastern South Carolina, including Gasque's home county of Florence. State and local Democratic leaders persuaded Bessie Gasque to run for her husband's unexpired term; even the filing fee was provided for her.[8] In the perfunctory one-party special election of September 13, 1938, Elizabeth Gasque succeeded her late husband in little more than name. The election took place on the same day as that for her successor. John L. McMillan, a former secretary to Allard Gasque, was elected to the full term in the 76th Congress (1939–1941).[9] The 75th Congress had already adjourned, and although there was always the possibility that the President would call for a special lame duck session, observers considered that highly unlikely.[10] She captured 96 percent of the vote compared to a combined four percent by her two male Democratic opponents.

Following the election, Congresswoman Gasque returned to Washington. The fall races, however, went badly for the Democrats nationwide. Earlier that summer, President Roosevelt had led unsuccessful efforts to campaign against opponents of the New Deal in Democratic Party primaries. The failure of the highly public "purge," along with losses for Roosevelt proponents in many northern races, signaled the beginning of the end of the New Deal.[11] This chain of events also ended any possibility for a special lame duck session.

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Gasque "was a Congressman's wife 20 years and a Congressman's widow," one journalist wrote in 1939, "who wound up his affairs and took care of his district as though it were her life's work."

Gasque never received any committee assignments, and she was never sworn into office. She did, however, continue to be a presence on Washington's social scene, attending a presidential reception held in honor of the new Secretary of Commerce, Harry Hopkins, in December 1938.[12]

After she left Congress in January 1939, Gasque returned to South Carolina. She maintained her social ties in Washington, remaining active largely through her membership in the Congressional Club. After former South Carolina Senator Nathaniel Dial died in Washington in 1940, Gasque shared a Washington home with Dial's widow, who was noted for her parties. Locally, Gasque was active in dramatics and was an author and lecturer. At one point she served as the head of the Fine Arts Department of South Carolina's Federation of Women's Clubs. In her many travels, she was a constant booster of South Carolina as a vacation destination.[13] She eventually married A.J. Van Exem. The couple lived at Cedar Tree Plantation in Ridgeway, South Carolina, where she became a master tree farmer. She died on November 2, 1989, at the age of 103.

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Gladys S. Pyle
1890–1989

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ REPUBLICAN FROM SOUTH DAKOTA
1938–1939

The short Senate career of Gladys S. Pyle stood in marked contrast with her long and influential participation in her native South Dakota's politics. A daughter of a leading suffragist and state attorney general, Pyle was oriented to public service from an early age. Her brief time as Senator, nevertheless, stood as a signal moment in a life of commitment to South Dakotans. "Citizenship," she once observed, "is service."[1]

Gladys Shields Pyle was born on October 4, 1890, in Huron, South Dakota, the youngest of four children of John L. Pyle and Mamie Shields Pyle. Her father was a lawyer, the South Dakota attorney general, and a patron of Huron College. Mamie Pyle led the Universal Franchise League, which eventually won the vote for South Dakota women in 1918. Both parents fostered in their children a commitment to public service from which young Gladys drew for the rest of her long life. After graduating with a liberal arts degree with a music emphasis from Huron College in 1911, Gladys Pyle took graduate courses at the American Conservatory of Music and the University of Chicago. In 1912, she returned to Huron, where she taught high school until 1918, when she accepted a position as principal of a school in Wessington, North Dakota. Two years later she left teaching to work briefly as a lecturer for the League of Women Voters, traveling to several midwestern states to deliver talks on citizenship and voter participation.[2] Pyle never married.

Gladys Pyle made the transition to politics in order to put into practice what she had preached in the classroom. Years later she described her lifelong political philosophy as being that of a Progressive, moderate Republican.[3] "Politics . . . is like sailing a boat," Pyle observed. "You have to learn to tack, going from one side of the river to the other. It takes a little longer, but you can make good progress."[4] Political activism was requisite for her.[5] Ironically, she embarked on her new career against the advice of her mother, who had reservations about Gladys running for elective office, perhaps because she believed it would make her daughter vulnerable to charges of riding her mother's coattails.[6] Undeterred, 32-year-old Gladys Pyle ran for the state legislature in 1922, winning election to the South Dakota house of representatives by a slender 350 votes. Pyle, the first woman elected to the state legislature, served an additional two terms and was instrumental in gaining South Dakota's ratification of the Child Labor Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.[7] During her time in the legislature, Pyle also served as assistant secretary of state. In 1926, she became the first woman elected as South Dakota secretary of state. She served for two terms from 1927 to 1931, introducing some of the nation's first safety codes for automobiles and motorcycles.[8]

In March 1930, Pyle made national headlines when she entered the GOP primary for South Dakota governor against four men, including former Governor Carl Gunderson and Brooke Howell, a favorite of state financiers. Pyle refused to take to the campaign trail, citing her responsibilities as secretary of state. She did, however, launch a targeted public relations blitz at newspaper editors, state delegates, and GOP county chairmen. Her campaign centered on the issue of banking reform and tighter control of miscellaneous state funds. Her slogan was, "Clean up the banks." Pyle surprised observers by winning more votes than any of her rivals—and topping her nearest contender, Gunderson, by about 1,600 votes. The 28 percent she polled, however, fell short of the 35 percent minimum required by law. The nomination was decided at a special state GOP convention in Sioux Falls in May 1930. Howell, Pyle's chief rival, eventually with-

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drew from the race and on the 12th ballot threw his support behind Warren E. Green, a dirt farmer who had won just seven percent of the primary vote.[9] Green prevailed. For Pyle, the episode revealed that her public career had reached something of a political glass ceiling, as the state's political old guard refused to back her.[10] From 1931 to 1933, Pyle served by appointment as secretary of the securities commission of South Dakota.[11] As secretary of the commission, she became the first woman in the state to run an executive department and the first woman permitted onto the floor of the New York Curb Market.[12] Except for her brief time in Washington, from 1933 until the 1980s, Gladys Pyle went into business as an insurance agent for two national companies.

Pyle took a circuitous route to the U.S. Senate, shaped by tragedy and peculiarities in South Dakota election laws. In late December 1936, Progressive-Republican Senator Peter Norbeck of South Dakota died after a long illness. Outgoing Democratic Governor Tom Berry, who had been defeated by a Republican in the November elections, quickly appointed Democrat Herbert Hitchcock to fill the vacancy. However, by state law, Hitchcock had to step down once the next regularly scheduled general election took place in November 1938. While a new Senator would be elected for the full term from 1939–1945, technically the seat would remain vacant from November 1938 until a successor was sworn into office in January 1939. The 75th Congress (1937–1939) had adjourned in June 1938 to prepare for the elections, and it was customary that it would not reconvene until the start of the 76th Congress (1939–1941) in January 1939. Normally, such a vacancy would provoke little concern. But as the 1938 elections took shape, rumors swirled that President Roosevelt would call for a special session after the elections to capitalize on the existing Democratic margins in both chambers of Congress. In response, the South Dakota Republican Party, which dominated the congressional delegation, pushed for a special election and sought a candidate to fill the two-month term. GOP candidate Chandler Gurney had won the nomination for the full term, but state laws prevented his name from appearing twice on the ballot.[13]

GOP leaders turned to Gladys Pyle because she had enough name recognition and support to win without the party having to invest considerable resources in the race. She traveled the state to campaign on behalf of the entire GOP ticket, with support from the Republican National Committee, arguing that the New Deal had not done enough for South Dakotans. Pyle also tapped into a strong statewide network of Republican women's clubs.[14] Recognizing that her term would be brief, voters went to the polls on November 8, 1938, and chose the 48-year-old Pyle seemingly as a gesture of appreciation for her service to the state. She registered a resounding win over Democrat John T. McCullen, 58 to 42 percent of the vote, garnering nearly 10,000 votes more than the next-best vote getter on the ticket—Gurney, who won the election for the full term. It also made her the first Republican woman elected to the Senate and the first woman from either party to win election to the Senate in her own right, without having first been appointed to fill a vacancy.

Because Congress already had adjourned, and FDR never did call a special session, Pyle was never officially sworn in to the Senate. Despite the lack of committee assignments and legislative duties, she left Huron the day after Thanksgiving and drove to Washington, D.C., with her mother and an aide and spent the next five weeks in the capital as South Dakota's Senator. She paid her own travel expenses because Members only received mileage costs if they were commuting to and from a session of Congress.[15] Once in Washington, she and an interim appointee from California shared an office space customarily reserved for one Senator.[16]

Pyle did not lack for things to do. She rallied support for her Depression-burdened state by pushing various highway and Works Progress Administration (WPA) programs. Pyle intervened with the Department of the Interior on behalf of landholders on Indian reservations who had suffered years of ruined crops and fallen far behind on mortgage payments. She also handled cases with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, investigated the sale of land inside a state park, and worked to expand funding for WPA projects within her state. Pyle tended to individual constituent needs ranging from pensions and

hospitalization to civil service ratings.[17] In addition, she persuaded Norwegian officials to schedule a June 1939 visit to South Dakota of the crown prince and princess of Norway during their North American travels, delighting thousands of South Dakotans of Scandinavian heritage.[18] "I wish I had come the day after the election," Pyle admitted as her term expired. "Just because the Senate is not in session is no sign a Senator cannot be of service to her constituents."[19]

In January 1939, Pyle returned to her insurance business and stayed closely involved in public service work. At the 1940 GOP Convention in Philadelphia, she became the first woman to nominate a presidential candidate, backing South Dakota Governor Harlan J. Bushfield.[20] During that same year, she also made an unsuccessful bid for mayor of her hometown of Huron.[21] From 1943 to 1957, Pyle served on the South Dakota board of charities and corrections. In 1947, she and five other women became the first in state history to serve on a jury, as South Dakota dropped its all-male requirement. Pyle lived in Huron and was involved in numerous charities and civic organizations. In 1980, on her 90th birthday, the town named Pyle its "First Citizen." At the age of 98, Gladys Pyle died on March 14, 1989, in Huron.

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NOTES

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Jessie Sumner
1898–1994

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM ILLINOIS
1939–1947

Few Members of Congress so vocally denounced the Franklin Roosevelt administration and American intervention in World War II as Illinois Representative Jessie Sumner. Sumner not only advocated American isolationism, she reveled in it—using her biting wit and animated floor speeches to skewer wartime policies, America's major allies, and plans for U.S. participation in the postwar United Nations. By war's end, however, as an internationalist mood took hold in the country, it was Congresswoman Sumner who found herself increasingly isolated.

Jessie Sumner was born in Milford, Illinois, on July 17, 1898, to Aaron Taylor Sumner and Elizabeth Gillan Sumner. Her ancestors included such distant relations as General Zachary Taylor, who became the 12th American President, and outspoken antislavery Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. Jessie Sumner graduated from the Girton School in Winnetka, Illinois, in 1916. She earned an economics degree at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1920. Jessie Sumner never married and relished the freedom that unwed life afforded her.[1] She studied law at the University of Chicago, Oxford University in England, and Columbia University and briefly at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. In 1923 she passed the Illinois bar and commenced practice as a private lawyer in Chicago. On the eve of the Great Depression, Sumner took a job with Chase National Bank in New York City. By 1932, she had returned to Milford, Illinois, to resume her law practice and work as a director at Sumner National Bank, which her father had founded. Her move into politics was abetted, in part, by bank robbers who abducted her brother. After the kidnappers were apprehended, she worked feverishly to secure their convictions and was inspired to run for the office of state's attorney. Sumner lost in the GOP primary but, with the passing of her uncle, John H. Gillan, the Iroquois County judge, she ran a successful campaign in 1937 to succeed him. Sumner received national notoriety by becoming the first woman to hold a county judgeship in her state.[2]

Iroquois County was one of six jurisdictions along Illinois' eastern border with Indiana, incorporating the district once represented by "Uncle" Joe Cannon, the autocratic Republican leader and House Speaker. In 1938, Sumner used her new political influence to secure the district's GOP nomination. In the general election, serving as her own campaign manager, she faced three-term incumbent Democrat James A. Meeks, a 74-year-old lawyer. Rather than smothering her audiences with platitudes, Sumner pledged nothing more than to work hard for good government.[3] Her primary theme was a consistent attack against New Deal programs which, she argued, overtaxed Americans and intruded on their individual liberties. In particular, she singled out Roosevelt as practicing "one-man government," a charge that resonated with an electorate outraged by the President's ham-handed attempt to pack the Supreme Court with justices favorable to his programs. With the backing of the anti-Roosevelt *Chicago Tribune*, Sumner defeated Meeks with 55 percent of the vote. She joined 76 new Republicans when the 76th Congress (1939–1941) convened in January 1939.

Within weeks, Sumner emerged as a darling of the Washington press, tossing out "Sumnerisms" which provoked her opponents and delighted extreme proponents of isolationism and rolling back the New Deal.[4] The day she was sworn in, reporters asked for her evaluation of

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President Roosevelt as a politician. "I am here to bury Caesar—not to praise him," Sumner quipped.[5] She referred to FDR as "Papa Roosevelt" and the "Great Spender."[6] Popular among Members for her self-deprecating style, Sumner even took to joking about her marital status and wardrobe.[7] After failing to secure a seat on the Agriculture Committee, Sumner earned a spot on the Banking and Currency Committee—her single committee assignment during her eight years in the House. Though an Agriculture seat may have more directly benefited the many farmers in her district, voters did not seem to mind that Sumner's committee assignment conferred fewer prizes. She made several speeches pressing the case that New Deal relief programs failed to alleviate the tax burden that beset American farmers.[8]

While opposition to domestic policies got her elected, the imperatives of military preparedness absorbed Sumner's attention in Congress. After World War II erupted in September 1939, Sumner opposed amending the Neutrality Act to lift the arms embargo in favor of a "cash and carry" policy, whereby belligerents could buy American war materials and transport them in their own ships. In the fall of 1940 she opposed the Burke–Wadsworth Selective Service Bill, which established the first peacetime draft in the country's history. A year later she voted against its extension and against the arming of American merchant ships ferrying war materials to Europe. She also rejected direct American aid to the British, expressing grave reservations that the President was nudging the country to war, having struck a secret alliance with London. Sumner laced her speeches with anglophobia and subtle admiration for Nazi Germany's militarization.[9] In 1939, she introduced a joint resolution to prevent U.S. participation in foreign combat without congressional consent. "We have more to fear from an American invasion of Europe," Sumner declared, "than from a European invasion of America."[10]

President Roosevelt was Sumner's target of opportunity, but her attacks also sought to rouse Congress to preserve its oversight powers and prerogative to shape American foreign policy. Sumner hoped to rein in FDR's powers by using the House's authority to originate and pass appropriations, even over the President's veto. "Today when the White House endeavors to control your votes as Representatives, by promising to approve or threatening to withhold projects for your district, they are using a power which you delegated to the Executive very recently," Sumner warned colleagues. "It is an abuse of that power. It robs you of your right and duty to vote your convictions."[11]

Sumner's isolationism mirrored that of her constituency. In her first bid for re-election in 1940, Sumner again defeated Meeks with 53 versus 47 percent of the vote. She won against two other candidates by even wider margins in 1942 and 1944, with 62 percent and 57 percent, respectively.[12] Increasingly, however, the Illinois Congresswoman found herself moving against the current in Washington.

Sumner's strident attacks on the FDR administration were only amplified after America joined the war. Most significantly, she opposed opening a Western Europe front to relieve pressure on the Soviet Union. In March 1944, Sumner took to the House Floor to declare that it made no difference whether Hitler or Stalin dominated Europe and warned an invasion might cost a million lives. "The difference between these two ambitious tyrants is not worth the life of a single American boy," she declared.[13] That spring Sumner offered an amendment to postpone the long anticipated D-Day, calling the proposed invasion a "quixotism." Simultaneously, she submitted a bill to enlarge the Pacific campaign, vesting all military authority in General Douglas MacArthur.[14]

One of Sumner's few legislative achievements during the Second World War came during consideration of a $20 billion naval appropriations bill in January 1942, when she secured an amendment (passed without dissent) that prohibited the use of parties, champagne, or gifts during the launching of new ships.[15] She introduced a bill for an Equal Rights Amendment with language modified to help women to enter the wartime workforce.[16] Sumner also urged passage of a bill to provide childcare facilities in war industry factories, to permit more women to join the job market.[17]

"Today when the White House endeavors to control your votes as Representatives, by promising to approve or threatening to withhold projects for your district, they are using a power which you delegated to the Executive very recently. It is an abuse of that power. It robs you of your right and duty to vote your convictions."

—Jessie Sumner
U.S. House of Representatives Floor Speech
June 29, 1939

As the debate shifted from waging war to structuring the peace, Sumner's enthusiasm grew for withdrawing completely from world affairs and retreating into "fortress America." She opposed American involvement in a world organization, echoing Joe Cannon's reservations about the old League of Nations that it might become a "league of appropriations" financed by Washington.[18] Sumner denounced Representative J. William Fulbright's 1943 resolution endorsing U.S. participation in the establishment of international machinery to maintain peace, as "the most dangerous bill ever presented to an American Congress."[19] The House approved the measure, 360 to 29. In December 1945, the House overwhelmingly ratified participation in the postwar United Nations, 344 to 15. Sumner was one of 14 Republicans and one Progressive to vote against it.

In Stalin's hands, Sumner insisted, such a world government would be put to more sinister uses. Fearing that the Soviet Union might use its supervisory power over relief operations to influence the policies of countries it had liberated from German occupation, Sumner also rejected the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).[20] The House strongly supported UNRRA, which housed, clothed, and fed millions of refugees in Europe after the war. In June 1945, Sumner criticized legislation authorizing the Bretton Woods Agreements, which established the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Describing both agencies as the worst fraud in American history, she warned that foreign governments would have unrestricted access to American capital.[21] Her former professor at Smith College, now fellow committee member, Chase Woodhouse of Connecticut, debated her on the merits of the Bretton Woods Agreements. When Sumner proposed to join the Bank but not the Fund, her amendment went down to defeat, 328 to 29. Sumner again was in the distinct minority when the measure to enter both agencies came before the House —just one of 18 Republicans in the "No" column.

Sumner had publicly announced in early 1944 that she would not seek re-election to the 79th Congress (1945–1947). "Being a Congressman in war-time is a heartbreaking job," she observed, citing her "growing sense of frustration."[22] She lamented the fact that Congress exercised little power over foreign policy.[23] Weeks later she recanted her decision, noting her determination to oppose administration policies she believed would precipitate war with Russia. Though she won re-election in November 1944, national results, including FDR's re-election to an unprecedented fourth term, convinced Sumner that the President's internationalist policies had triumphed.[24] In 1946, she chose to retire to private life in Milford as a director and, after 1966, as president of Sumner National Bank. Jessie Sumner worked there until her death on August 10, 1994, in Watseka, near Milford.

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Clara G. McMillan
1894–1976

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA
1939–1941

A one-term Representative from South Carolina, Clara G. McMillan faced the growing menace of war in Europe from the perspective of being a recent widow and a mother of five young sons.

Clara E. Gooding was the second daughter born to William and Mary Gooding in Brunson, South Carolina, on August 17, 1894. She graduated from the public schools in her hometown and later attended the Confederate Home College in Charleston and the Flora McDonald College in Red Springs, North Carolina. She married Thomas Sanders McMillan, a lawyer who served in the South Carolina house of representatives from 1917 to 1924. During his last two years, he served as speaker of the South Carolina house. In 1924, he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served eight terms and eventually became a high-ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. Throughout her husband's congressional service, Clara McMillan remained in Charleston, South Carolina, raising their five sons: Thomas, Jr., James, William, Edward, and Robert.[1] From a distance, she nevertheless kept in "close contact and cooperation" with Thomas's legislative policies.[2]

When Thomas McMillan died on September 29, 1939, South Carolina Democratic Party leaders chose Clara McMillan to run in the special election to fill her husband's coastal Carolina seat. Like most southern states, South Carolina operated under a one-party system in the early 20th century, wherein winning the Democratic nomination was tantamount to winning the general election. Less from a sense of chivalry toward a widow than the need to head off an intraparty fight among aspirants for the seat, local political leaders chose McMillan to fill out the remaining year of her husband's term. Against two weak opponents, Shep Hutto of Dorchester and James De Fieville of Walterboro, she won election to the House with 79 percent of the vote on November 7, 1939, to represent a sprawling district that covered Charleston and nine adjacent low-country counties.[3] Afterward, McMillan, who had campaigned on her familiarity with her husband's work, said she "felt it would come out as it did" because "I told the voters I would carry on his work."[4] A group of Berkeley County voters filed a protest to invalidate the special election because, they argued, the secrecy of the ballot was not maintained.[5] The South Carolina supreme court overruled the protest in late December, and McMillan took her seat in Congress at the opening of the third session of the 76th Congress (1939–1941) on January 3, 1940.

In a session that lasted a full year, McMillan served on the Committee on Patents; the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds; and the Committee on the Election of the President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress. In addition to answering constituent requests, some minor work engaged her interests. She introduced legislation to provide for the designation of individual domiciles in income tax returns and to allow local police officers to mail firearms for repairs. But these were secondary considerations.

The threat of American involvement in the war in Europe dominated the business of the final session of the 76th Congress. The Second World War had erupted in Europe on September 1, 1939, with the German invasion of Poland. In advocating for military preparedness, McMillan, like many of her colleagues, insisted that federal resources be devoted to defensive measures. "Perhaps it is true that geographically we are so situated that a serious

invasion by any one of the powers engaged in present world conflicts is virtually impossible," McMillan told colleagues in a floor speech. "But conditions change rapidly . . . press, radio, and motion pictures bring us every day new and more striking evidence of the futility of invoking treaties, covenants, and moral sanctions against a well-prepared aggressor. He understands only one language and we must learn to speak that language well. I believe firmly in military and naval preparedness."[6]

Conditions in Europe outpaced the push for preparedness in America. In the months following McMillan's speech, the situation for the Allies grew grim as German troops invaded France and, within six weeks, occupied Paris and forced the capitulation of the French army. Berlin's "blitzkrieg" warfare had swept resistance out of western Europe and isolated Great Britain, America's closest traditional ally.

These developments forced McMillan and her colleagues to countenance not only how to create an effective deterrent force but how to raise an army to fight a war that, daily, America seemed less able to avoid. McMillan took to the House Floor and, in an impassioned speech that drew much applause, spoke in favor of the Burke–Wadsworth Selective Service Bill of 1940, which established the nation's first peacetime draft. The concept of universal military training ("UMT," as it was known at the time) marked a radical departure for many Americans. Looking to past traditions as well as modern totalitarian governments abroad, many had believed that domestic liberties could not coexist with a large standing army that might be used to quash internal dissent. McMillan disagreed for both political and personal reasons. She supported President Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy broadly and realized that Charleston, the district's largest city, would have a major role to play as a center for naval operations. But there were other reasons, too, which compelled her support for UMT. "I have five sons. The oldest will come immediately under the operation of the bill and be subject to its provisions, as he is past 21 years," McMillan told her colleagues. "My second son is almost 19 years old and is now taking military training in a school organized for that purpose. If and when my sons are needed for the defense of their country, I do not want them to go up against experienced soldiers, untrained and unskilled."[7] Three days later, the draft bill passed Congress and was signed into law.

Meanwhile, by the summer of 1940, South Carolina Democratic leaders had found their favored strong horse, Lucius Mendel Rivers, to replace their interim candidate. McMillan declined re-nomination for a full term when local politicos threw their support behind Rivers. Mendel Rivers, a young lawyer and South Carolina state representative from 1933 to 1936, went on to represent the district for nearly 30 years and eventually rose to chair the Committee on Armed Services. In the process he helped make Charleston the locus of one of the largest military establishments on the East Coast. When McMillan left Congress in 1941, she continued her government service with the National Youth Administration, the Office of Government Reports in the Office of War Information, and, from 1946 to 1957, as information liaison officer in the Department of State. Clara McMillan retired to Barnwell, South Carolina, where she died on November 8, 1976.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Clara Gooding McMillan," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

The University of South Carolina (Columbia, SC), Modern Political Collections, South Caroliniana Library. The Thomas S. and Clara G. McMillan Papers, ca. 1870–1980, 0.5 linear foot. The papers include general papers, speeches, photographs, clippings, and ephemera for Thomas and Clara McMillan. Of particular interest is correspondence from Clara McMillan to her son Edward after her retirement, as well as photographs documenting her Mother of the Year ceremonies, 1960, and highway dedication, 1980.

NOTES

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Frances Payne Bolton
1885–1977

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM OHIO
1940–1969

At one time celebrated as the richest woman in America, Frances Payne Bolton of Ohio shed the comfortable life of a trust fund beneficiary to enter the political arena. Her cosmopolitan upbringing and range of interests—from public health to Buddhism to economic development in sub-Saharan Africa—shaped much of her long career in Congress. From her seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Bolton influenced American foreign policy from World War II to the Vietnam War.

Frances Payne Bingham was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on March 29, 1885, to Charles W. Bingham and Mary Perry Payne Bingham. Her family's ties to the Standard Oil fortune permitted them to travel widely and to provide schooling for Frances at elite finishing schools and with private tutors. Her family also had a long history of public service. Mary Bingham's father, Henry B. Payne, served as an Ohio Representative and Senator in the late 1800s. On September 14, 1907, Frances Bingham married attorney Chester Castle Bolton. Mrs. Frances Bolton later became involved with a visiting nurses' program in Cleveland's tenements. During World War I, the couple and their three sons—Charles, Kenyon, and Oliver—moved to Washington, where Chester Bolton served on the War Industries Board and his wife worked with various nursing groups. During the war, she also inherited a trust fund established by her uncle, Oliver Hazard Payne, a founder of Standard Oil. The bequest made Bolton one of the world's wealthiest women and allowed her to establish the Payne Fund, which eventually distributed grants into areas of particular interest to her. In 1919, Bolton and her newborn daughter fell victim to a worldwide influenza epidemic. The baby died, and she barely survived, adopting a strict regimen of yoga exercises to aid her recovery. She also acquired an interest in eastern religions, shaping her spiritual life around Buddhism.[1]

While in Washington, Chester Bolton established himself as a powerful politician. From 1923 to 1928, he served in the Ohio state senate before winning election in 1928 to the first of five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from a district representing outlying Cleveland. The family lived in Washington until his defeat in the 1936 elections and returned to Ohio, where Frances Bolton served on the state Republican Central Committee. Though in poor health, Chester Bolton regained his House seat in 1938 and again relocated the family to Washington for the opening of the 76th Congress (1939–1941) in January 1939. On October 29 of that year, Chester Bolton died. When Frances Bolton decided to seek her late husband's House seat, the Ohio GOP gave her a muted reception but eventually backed the nomination out of a sense of obligation to Chester Bolton's memory. "A few of [the party leaders] opposed my nomination," Bolton recalled, "but most of them thought it would be a graceful gesture which would do them no harm since they were sure I would get tired of politics in a few months, and flit on to something else."[2] Her deep pockets, both for her own campaign and the party's statewide effort, factored into her initial 1940 campaign success. She won the February 27, 1940, special election by a 2–1 margin, a greater plurality than her husband had enjoyed in any of his campaigns. Later, in the fall of 1940, Bolton defeated her Democratic challenger with 57 percent of the vote, polling more total votes than any other House candidate in the state. Bolton was never seriously challenged in her subsequent 13 re-elections in her district,

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

the largest by population in the country, boasting a mix of shipbuilding, foreign-born residents as well as long-standing, wealthy inhabitants.[3] The first woman elected from Ohio, she also became the only mother to serve simultaneously with her son, Oliver H. Bolton, when he represented a district east of his mother's for three terms in the 1950s.

As a Member of the 76th Congress, Bolton served on the Committee on Indian Affairs; the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments; and the Committee on Election of the President, Vice President and Representatives. After her re-election to the succeeding Congress, the well-traveled Bolton resigned those minor assignments for a better seat on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, where she served throughout her tenure in the House. Eventually, Bolton rose to the Ranking Minority Member post of Foreign Affairs. In addition to her standing committee assignments, Bolton served from 1955 to 1965 on the House Republican Policy Committee, which determined committee assignments and party positions on issues before the House.

Bolton entered the House in March 1940, little more than six months into the Second World War. Though starting as a moderate isolationist, she slowly came to support military preparedness. Yet, she held out late hope that America could avoid intervention. With some reservation, she supported the Lend-Lease program to sell weapons and warships and to provide monetary aid to the Allies in 1940. She opposed revision of the 1939 Neutrality Act, arguing that while she supported making America the "arsenal of Hitler's foes," President Roosevelt was obliged to "make no move to precipitate us into war."[4] As late as November 1941, Bolton still was reluctant to commit American forces to the conflict. "I beg you, think most carefully before you commit this land of ours . . . to go into a war [to] which most of her people are opposed, and to do so secretly under the cover of promises of peace," she appealed to her colleagues. "I can follow the President a long way, and I have done my best to help him keep his word to . . . our people that we shall not go into war."[5] The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor moved Bolton firmly into the internationalist camp. "I have not agreed with the foreign policies of the administration," Bolton admitted. "But all that is past. We are at war and there is no place in our lives for anything that will not build our strength and power, and build it quickly."[6] So complete was her turn that by June 1943, Bolton took to the House Floor to voice her support for the Fulbright Resolution, which passed the House and declared America's intention to participate in postwar international organizations.[7]

Bolton's primary wartime focus was in the realm of health care, a subject that had interested her since World War I. As early as May 1940, she had broached the idea of an army school of nursing on the House Floor.[8] In 1943, she authored the $5 million Bolton Act, creating a U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, which one year later, had trained some 124,000 nurses. In exchange for the education, these nurses committed to a tour of duty in the armed services or in an essential civilian posts for a period of time after their training. The Bolton Act also demonstrated the Congresswoman's sympathy for African-American civil rights, as it stipulated that funding be allocated without regard to race or ethnicity. "What we see is that America cannot be less than herself once she awakens to the realization that freedom does not mean license and that license can be the keeping of others from sharing that freedom," Bolton noted.[9] In 1944, Bolton traveled to Europe to observe firsthand the military hospitals and the nurses she helped to put in place. Her efforts to bring women into greater positions of responsibility in the military extended into the 1950s. Bolton's belief in war preparedness led her to conclude that women should be drafted into noncombat roles. "I am afraid that gallantry is sorely out of date, and as a woman I find it rather stupid," she said. "Women's place includes defending the home."[10]

Bolton's work on Foreign Affairs consumed much of her postwar career and allowed her a series of firsts. At the invitation of the Soviet Ambassador, she became the first committee member to travel to the Soviet Union. On her initiative as part of the 1946 Legislative Reorganization Act, the full committee reorganized into five permanent subcommittees, corresponding with the State Department's

"Prejudice [must be put down] wherever it raises its head, whether we are victims or not. [An] attack on any group endangers everyone's freedom."

—Frances Bolton
Address to the
United Nations General Assembly, 1954

divisions of the globe. As the chair of the Near East and Africa Subcommittee of Foreign Affairs, she became the first woman to lead a congressional delegation overseas in 1947. Bolton's frequent trips to the African continent (paid out of her own pocket) led the press to dub her the "African Queen"—a reference to the 1951 film.[11] In 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed her as the first woman congressional Delegate to the United Nations.[12] In the last three months of 1955, at the age of 70, Bolton undertook her longest journey to Africa. She survived an attempted charge on her car by a bull elephant, hiked up mountains, and visited remote native villages.[13] She was not distracted from serious aspects to the trip: the development of health care programs and food and aid distribution. After meetings with high-ranking South African officials in Johannesburg, Bolton denounced that nation's system of racial apartheid, which she described as "contrary to the universal law of evolution."[14] The South African foreign minister claimed that Bolton had delivered a "distorted picture" of apartheid and added, "A more flagrant intrusion into the political affairs of another country. . . would be difficult to imagine."[15] Bolton, undeterred, continued to press her case in Congress.

Her interest in African issues, particularly the effects of decolonization in Africa, reinforced her own convictions about the need to dismantle segregation in America. Bolton persisted in her core belief that for the United States to wage the Cold War effectively, it had to live up to its democratic rhetoric to attract developing nations to its cause. It was, moreover, a matter of personal principle and conviction. In 1954 Bolton delivered an address before the U.N. General Assembly, attacking the apartheid practices in South Africa and, again, alluding to America's failure to live up to its rhetoric of democracy. "Prejudice [must be put down] wherever it raises its head, whether we are victims or not," Bolton declared. "[An] attack on any group endangers everyone's freedom."[16]

Bolton's sense of adventure was matched by her humor, work ethic, and loyalty to women colleagues. In the late 1940s, the U.S. Navy invited "Congressmen" "Francis" Bolton, Cecil Harden, and Chase Woodhouse to make an overnight visit aboard the U.S.S. *Midway*. Navy rules, in fact, prohibited women from spending the night aboard ship, but the invitations nevertheless were sent out to the three women because they had masculine-sounding names. Bolton and her two women colleagues debated whether to accept. Finally, Woodhouse declared, "Of course, we ought to. After all, aren't you a Congressman?" Bolton replied, "You bet your life I am, and I work twice as hard as most of the men."[17] Bolton earned accolades for supporting her women colleagues, regardless of party affiliation. With the death of Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts in 1960, she became the dean of women Members in the House; her 29 total years of service still rank her behind only Rogers for the longest term of service for a woman in the House.

In her final campaign in 1968, Bolton was caught in a redistricting battle. Democratic Congressman Charles Vanik, first elected to the House to represent another Cleveland seat in 1954, challenged Bolton in her newly redrawn, majority-Democratic district. Vanik defeated the 83-year-old Bolton with 55 percent of the vote. After the election, the Richard M. Nixon administration considered rewarding her long career with an ambassadorship. Bolton demurred, "No . . . I'm retired. Now I can do what I please."[18] She returned to Lyndhurst, Ohio, where she resided until her death on March 9, 1977, shortly before her 92nd birthday.

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Western Reserve Historical Society (Cleveland, OH). *Papers:* 1939–1977, 175 feet, 30 oversize volumes, and one oversize folder. Correspondence, reports, publications, clippings, and other materials generated during or pertaining to Frances Bolton's service in the U.S. House of Representatives, particularly reflecting her interest in nursing, work on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, travel on behalf of the committee, and work with the United Nations. Finding aid in repository. *Papers:* In the Chester Castle Bolton Papers, 1916–1943, 6.62 linear ft. Other authors include Frances Payne Bolton. *Papers:* Frances Payne Bolton Audio-Visual Collection, approximately 5,400 prints and 1,300 negatives and positive transparencies, 111 film titles, 287 audio discs, and 80 audio tapes. Includes extensive documentation from Frances Payne Bolton's African trips and other official congressional travel, campaigns, and the United Nations General Assembly. Also includes photographs of family, friends, and government officials. Audio tapes contain campaign spots, radio broadcasts, and speeches. A finding aid is available in the repository.

NOTES

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Margaret Chase Smith
1897–1995

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ 1940–1949
UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ 1949–1973
REPUBLICAN FROM MAINE

For more than three decades, Margaret Chase Smith served as a role model for women aspiring to national politics. As the first woman to win election to both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate, Smith cultivated a career as an independent and courageous legislator. Senator Smith bravely denounced McCarthyism at a time when others feared speaking out would ruin their careers. Though she believed firmly that women had a political role to assume, Smith refused to make an issue of her gender in seeking higher office. "If we are to claim and win our rightful place in the sun on an equal basis with men," she once noted, "then we must not insist upon those privileges and prerogatives identified in the past as exclusively feminine."[1]

Margaret Madeline Chase was born on December 14, 1897, in Skowhegan, Maine—the oldest of six children—to George Emery, the town barber, and Carrie Murray Chase, a waitress, store clerk, and shoe factory worker.[2] After graduating from Skowhegan High School in 1916, Chase took jobs as a teacher, telephone operator, and office manager for a woolen mill and on the staff of a small newspaper. In 1930, she married Clyde Harold Smith, an accomplished local politician.[3] In 1936, Clyde Smith was elected as a Republican to the House of Representatives for the 75th Congress (1937–1939). Margaret Smith managed his Washington office and also served as president of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Maine. She also worked on behalf of the Maine GOP committee.

In the spring of 1940, Representative Clyde Smith fell ill with a life-threatening heart condition. Realizing that he could not survive the rigors of an election campaign, he persuaded his wife to run for his seat in the general election the following November. Before his death on April 8, 1940, the Congressman told voters, "I know of no one else who has the full knowledge of my ideas and plans or is as well qualified as she is, to carry on these ideas or my unfinished work for the district."[4] His seat left vacant with his passing, Margaret Chase Smith declared her candidacy for the special election to serve out his unexpired term in the 76th Congress (1939–1941).[5] In the May 13, 1940, Republican special primary, Smith topped her challenger by a more-than 10-to-1 margin, virtually assuring her election to the House in the heavily Republican district.[6] Without a Democratic challenger, she won the June 3 special election, becoming Maine's first woman Member of Congress. On June 17, 1940, only a week after being seated in the House, Congresswoman Smith won the GOP primary for the full term in the 77th Congress (1941–1943), garnering more than 27,000 votes and amassing more than four times the total of her nearest competitor.[7] Her second primary triumph dispelled a popular notion that voters would abandon her—having believed that by electing her to a brief term they had fulfilled their obligation to seeing her husband's programs through to conclusion.

In the 1940 general election, Smith ran on a platform of military preparedness (including expansion of the navy, which played well in her shipbuilding district) and support for old-age pensions and assistance, which appealed to the state's large elderly population. She portrayed herself as a moderate who, in contrast to liberal feminists, would work within the established order; she employed that argument for many later campaigns. Smith drew upon her experiences campaigning with her husband, particularly his ability to strike up personal relationships with voters.[8] Smith won the general election over Democrat Edward Beauchamp, with 65 percent of the vote. After her 1940 campaigns,

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE U.S. SENATE HISTORICAL OFFICE

Smith was re-elected to the three succeeding Congresses with relatively little challenge, defeating her opponents with 60 percent or more of the vote.[9]

As a freshman in 1940, Representative Smith had hoped to carry on her husband's work on the Labor Committee, but she was instead pushed onto four low-level committees: War Claims; Revision of the Laws; Invalid Pensions; and the Election of the President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress.[10] Though she often broke with her GOP colleagues on important votes, party leaders answered her persistent request for a better committee assignment in the 78th Congress (1943–1945). Smith received a position on the prominent House Naval Affairs Committee—a fair compromise after her strategic request for the highly coveted Appropriations panel. "When I asked for a committee, I asked for Appropriations, knowing that I would not get it," Smith recalled, "I asked for it, because that was the thing to do in those days. You didn't expect to get what you asked for, so you would ask for something that was impossible. . . . And Naval Affairs was what I wanted; I didn't want Appropriations . . . I think I was smart."[11] In addition to her Naval Affairs duties, Smith served on the Education Committee and the Post Office and Post Roads Committee. After the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 merged disparate committees with military jurisdictions, the Congresswoman was assigned to the Armed Services Committee.

Smith was an active member of the Naval Affairs and Armed Services Committees. Her position gave her power to award shipbuilding projects in Maine. It also made her an expert on military and national security matters, leading to her participation in an investigation of the construction of destroyers and the inspection of bases in the South Pacific. In addition, Smith participated in a trip to observe the postwar reconstruction in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. Though she expressed concern for the spread of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, Smith remained wary of domestic communist fears. She voted against legislation to make the House Select Committee on Un-American Activities permanent.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, Smith passed her landmark legislative achievement in the House: the Women's Armed Forces Integration Act. With a wartime peak enrollment of about 350,000, women were still considered volunteers for the armed services and did not receive any benefits.[12] In April 1947, while chairing the Armed Services' Subcommittee on Hospitalization and Medicine, Smith passed a bill giving regular status to navy and army nurses—well-accepted by her House colleagues because it covered women in traditional, "angel of mercy" roles.[13] When the Armed Forces Integration Act, providing for the permanent inclusion of all uniformed women in the military, easily passed the Senate in July 1947, Smith faced a greater challenge pushing the bill through the House. Opponents on the Armed Services Committee amended it over Smith's lone dissenting vote, significantly curtailing women's rights and benefits by offering them reserve status. The House passed the committee's version. In an effort to restore the bill's original intent in the conference committee, Smith appealed to her personal friend, Secretary of Defense William Forrestal, who gave her his full backing. Smith prevailed when the House conferees accepted a version of the legislation granting women regular status on July 2, 1948. President Harry Truman signed the bill into law 10 days later, just weeks before he racially integrated the armed forces by Executive Order.[14]

In 1947, when Maine's senior U.S. Senator, Republican Majority Leader Wallace White, announced he would not seek a fourth term, Smith entered the hotly contested 1948 primary to succeed him. The state Republican Party, stung by Smith's many votes across party lines, opposed her candidacy and supported Maine Governor Horace A. Hildreth in the four-way race. Running on the slogan, "Don't trade a record for a promise," Smith insisted that her legislative achievements in the House were worth more than the campaign promises of her opponents.[15] The personal touch that marked her House campaigns also aided in her senatorial bid. As she criss-crossed the state making speeches and meeting personally with constituents, many simply addressed her by her first name, "Margaret," with the kind of intimacy indicative of an old friendship.[16] A large corps of Maine

women volunteers also greatly aided her shoestring, grass-roots campaign.[17] In the June 21 primary, Smith received nearly 64,000 votes, a greater margin the combined votes of her three challengers. After capturing the primary, Smith won a lopsided election, defeating Democrat Adrian Scolten with 71 percent of the vote. Smith's election marked the first time a woman won election to the Senate without the widow or appointment connection and the first time a woman served in both chambers. Smith was re-elected to the Senate three more times by comfortable majorities.[18]

Despite her experience in the House, Smith needed to earn her seniority in the Senate. In her first term, she received three less powerful assignments: Committee on the District of Columbia, Committee on Rules and Administration, and the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments (after the 83rd Congress [1953–1955], named Government Operations). When Republicans briefly controlled the chamber in the 83rd Congress, Smith earned seats on two prominent committees which no woman had held before: Appropriations and Armed Services. She gave up Government Operations for an assignment on the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee in the 86th Congress (1959–1961)—a particularly influential panel at the dawn of the space race with the Soviet Union.[19] She maintained a place on these three key panels for the remainder of her Senate career.

Margaret Chase Smith's defining moment in the U.S. Senate came on June 1, 1950, when she took the Senate Floor to denounce the investigatory tactics of the redbaiting Wisconsin Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. In a speech she later called a "Declaration of Conscience," Smith charged that her Republican colleague had "debased" Senate deliberations "through the selfish political exploitation of fear, bigotry, ignorance and intolerance." She said, "The American people are sick and tired of being afraid to speak their minds lest they be politically smeared as 'Communists' or 'Fascists' by their opponents. Freedom of speech is not what it used to be in America. It has been so abused by some that it is not exercised by others."[20] Although the speech attracted favorable nationwide attention and was endorsed by six fellow Republicans in the Senate, it did little to restrain Senator McCarthy and his supporters. McCarthy ridiculed Senator Smith on the Senate Floor, and he poured political capital into the campaign of Smith's 1954 GOP rival. Late in 1954, the Senate censured McCarthy for his conduct of the Army– McCarthy hearings, effectively silencing him. Despite Smith's bravery in standing up to McCarthy, her reputation as a political maverick limited her later potential in the Senate. Among the costs were her removal from the Republican Policy Committee and a drop in seniority on the Permanent Investigations Subcommittee of the Government Operations Committee.[21]

In the Senate, Smith remained more of an independent than a party-line Republican vote. The Senator's meticulous and independent nature was most evident in her rejection

"The American people are sick and tired of being afraid to speak their minds lest they be politically smeared as 'Communists' or 'Fascists' by their opponents. Freedom of speech is not what it used to be in America. It has been so abused by some that it is not exercised by others."

—Margaret Chase Smith, Senate Floor Speech, June 1, 1950

of several high-profile presidential nominees. In 1957, after President Dwight D. Eisenhower nominated Hollywood actor, decorated World War II veteran, and army reservist James ("Jimmy") Stewart for promotion to brigadier general, Senator Smith recommended against his promotion. She led an unexpected rejection of Commerce Secretary nominee Lewis L. Strauss in 1959, marking the third time in a century that a Cabinet appointment was rejected and deeply angering the Eisenhower administration.[22] Nearly a decade later, Smith enraged the Richard M. Nixon White House when she and fellow Senators rejected Supreme Court nominee G. Harrold Carswell. Smith's independence on high-visibility issues made it hard to categorize her politics and somewhat diminished her influence. On the domestic front, the Senator supported legislation for primarily Democratic initiatives on educational funding and civil rights. However, Smith supported a much more aggressive foreign policy than that of the John F. Kennedy administration. After the Berlin Crisis of 1961, she accused President Kennedy of lacking the resolve to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union, chiding the President on the Senate Floor, "In short, we have the nuclear capability but not the nuclear credibility."[23] In her long career, Smith became a Senate institution in her own right. From June 1, 1955, to September 6, 1968, she cast 2,941 consecutive roll call votes. Her streak was interrupted only by recovery from hip surgery.

After months of denying rumors that she would seek the top of the Republican ticket or the vice presidential nomination, Senator Margaret Chase Smith announced her run for President in January 1964. "I have few illusions and no money, but I'm staying for the finish," she noted, "When people keep telling you, you can't do a thing, you kind of like to try."[24] Smith embarked on her typical grass-roots campaign—losing every primary but picking up a surprising high of 25 percent of the vote in Illinois.[25] At the 1964 Republican Convention, she became the first woman to have her name put in for nomination for the presidency by a major political party. Receiving the support of just 27 delegates and losing the nomination to Senate colleague Barry Goldwater, it was a symbolic achievement.

To the surprise of many across the country, Maine voters turned the venerable septuagenarian out of office in 1972, during her bid for a fifth consecutive term. Prior to the election, Smith had given serious consideration to retiring, but charges that she was too old—at age 74—to serve as a Senator had motivated her to run for re-election. The Democratic nominee, Maine U.S. Representative William D. Hathaway, emphasized Smith's age. He also claimed Smith was inaccessible and inattentive to Maine's concerns, citing the fact that she did not maintain an office in the state. Smith lost the election by 27,230 votes, a margin of 53 to 47 percent.[26]

Smith resettled in Skowhegan to oversee the construction of the Margaret Chase Smith Library Center, the first of its kind to focus its collection on the papers of a female Member of Congress. In 1989, President George H.W. Bush awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. Margaret Chase Smith died on May 29, 1995, at the age of 97, in her hometown of Skowhegan.

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Florence Reville Gibbs
1890–1964

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM GEORGIA
1940–1941

Election Day 1940 was just a month away, and the Members of the 76th Congress (1939–1941) saw no sign that they would adjourn for the election. As Members began leaving Washington to campaign, Florence Reville Gibbs arrived from Georgia, having just been elected to serve out the term of her late husband, Representative W. Ben Gibbs. Georgia's first woman elected to Congress served three months in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Florence Reville was born in Thomson, Georgia, on April 4, 1890, the oldest child of a country doctor, Thomas Porter Reville, and Sallie Printup Reville.[1] Florence Reville grew up in Thomson and left to attend Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia. She married a lawyer, Willis Benjamin Gibbs, and the couple settled in Jesup, Georgia, and had two children.[2] Ben Gibbs carved out a career as a government attorney at various local and county agencies. Eventually, he was elected unopposed to a Georgia seat in the U.S. House of Representatives for the 76th Congress. His initial term in Congress was successful enough that a district rival, John S. Gibson, informed Gibbs that he would go unchallenged at the next primary election.[3] But Gibbs never stood for re-election, dying of a sudden stroke on August 7, 1940, in Washington, D.C., just 19 months into his freshman term.[4]

Florence Gibbs acceded to the wishes of the local Democratic county leaders, who asked her to run for her husband's vacant seat. She won the uncontested October 1, 1940, special election called by Georgia Governor E.D. Rivers. Turnout for the special election was typically light—from the 20-county district in the state's southeast corner, fewer than 2,500 voters went to the polls.[5] The turnout was smaller than that of 1938, when her husband had first been elected to Congress unopposed with fewer than 5,000 votes. Just more than a month later, John S. Gibson was elected unopposed to the 77th Congress (1941–1943) with more than 24,000 votes.[6]

Florence Gibbs was sworn in two days after her election, October 3, 1940, in the midst of Franklin Roosevelt's campaign for a third term as President, the resumption of the military draft, and the expansion of the Axis Powers into the Balkans.[7] Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia, the dean of the state delegation and chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, arranged for Gibbs to be sworn in before her certificate of election had been filed by the House.[8] This was because Gibbs's term encompassed the last three months of the 76th Congress, whose third session extended throughout 1940 and recessed only for the Democratic and Republican national conventions during the summer. The following weekend was turning into an informal recess, as Members began streaming home to campaign for re-election.[9] For many Democrats, the prospects for retaining their majority status had been eroding. If Gibbs wasn't sworn in that week, the ceremony probably would have been delayed for weeks. She never received a committee assignment. Gibbs, who had no previous professional experience, was unaccustomed to such a public position. She has been described as softspoken and unassertive. A constituent recalled, "She was good for political patronage—mainly post office appointments. The job wasn't really to her liking."[10] Early on, Gibbs had made it clear that she would not be a candidate for re-election.[11]

Gibbs returned to Jesup, Georgia, at the conclusion of her House term. She died there 23 years later, on August 19, 1964.

IMAGE COURTESY OF AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

A constituent recalled, Gibbs "was good for political patronage—mainly post office appointments. The job wasn't really to her liking." Early on, Gibbs had made it clear that she would not be a candidate for re-election.

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Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Florence Reville Gibbs," http://bioguide.congress.gov

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Katharine Edgar Byron
1903–1976

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MARYLAND
1941–1943

Maryland's first woman Member in Congress, Katharine Edgar Byron, came to the House through the "widow's mandate," after an airplane crash had killed her husband. Congresswoman Byron became a firm supporter of President Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policies during World War II.

Katharine Edgar was born on October 25, 1903, to Brigadier General Clinton Goodloe and Mary McComas Edgar in Detroit, Michigan, where General Edgar was posted. Katharine's mother, Mary, belonged to a prominent political family from western Maryland. Her father, Louis Emory McComas, had served in the House and Senate during the late 19th century. Katharine, one of two children, spent an affluent and politically connected childhood based in the McComas estate, Springfield Farm, in western Maryland.[1] She attended elite private schools such as the Westover School in Middlebury, Connecticut, and the Holton Arms School in Montgomery County, just outside Washington, D.C. In 1922, Katharine met and married William D. Byron, a World War I aviator and the owner of a leather manufacturing business. The couple had five sons: William, James, Goodloe, David, and Louis. William Byron was mayor of Williamsport, Maryland, a member of the state senate, and a member of the Maryland Roads Commission. In 1938 he successfully ran for the U.S. House as a Democrat in a district that covered western Maryland, including the towns of Frederick and Hagerstown. Byron won a tight re-election race in 1940 against the legendary professional baseball pitcher Walter "Big Train" Johnson. Katharine Byron aided her husband's political career through her activities with local organizations such as the Red Cross flood disaster committee. She also served as town commissioner for Williamsport during William's House service. Additionally, Katharine was one of Washington's well-known Democratic hostesses from the Byron family home in northwest Washington.

Less than two months into his second term, Representative Byron died in an airplane accident on February 27, 1941, near Atlanta, Georgia, that killed six others and severely injured World War I flying ace Eddie Rickenbacker.[2] With only tepid support from local Democratic leaders, Katharine Byron decided within a month to seek her husband's seat in a special election scheduled for late May 1941. She said she hoped to "carry on Bill's work."[3] Among those rumored to be interested in the Democratic nomination were former Congressman David J. Lewis, Maryland Democratic National Committeeman William Preston Lane, State Senator John B. Funk, and Earl Cobey, a western Maryland attorney and an associate of U.S. Attorney General William C. Walsh. Lewis, a Progressive liberal and the former chairman of the Labor Committee, had represented the district for 14 years, from 1911 to 1917 and again from 1931 to 1939. In 1938, he made an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate, thus opening the seat which William Byron had won. Lane, a close associate of William Byron and the spouse of a Byron family member, refused to run against Katharine, although he also withheld his endorsement from her.[4] Women's groups in Montgomery County, one of the district's largest counties, did not support Byron because they did not believe she could defeat the presumptive Republican candidate, A. Charles Stewart from Frostburg, Maryland.[5] Meanwhile, Katharine Byron pressed party leaders for the nomination, telling them that she wanted to complete her husband's programs, but pledging that if she won she would not seek re-election to

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE HONORABLE BEVERLY BYRON

the 78th Congress (1943–1945). On April 19, 1941, 30 Democratic committeemen gathered in Hagerstown, Maryland, to choose their candidate. After a long deadlock, Byron prevailed when an Alleghany County committeeman swung his vote to her, giving her a 16–14 edge and the support of three of the district's five counties.[6]

Katharine Byron's campaign for the general election was equally contentious. Stewart, age 62, was a considerable opponent and a political veteran. In 1938, he lost narrowly to William Byron in a heated contest that centered on the New Deal—falling a little less than 1,500 votes short out of 91,000 cast.[7] In 1941, the new Byron–Stewart contest centered on the nation's response to war in Europe. The Democratic candidate backed the Roosevelt administration's foreign policies and pledged to support in Congress "all aid to Britain, short of war."[8] Stewart, tapping into isolationist sentiment in the rural areas of the state, accused Byron of being a rubber stamp for an administration trying to "spill blood of our boys in the squabbles of Europe." On Stewart's behalf, Walter Johnson stumped throughout the district, drawing large crowds of workers and baseball enthusiasts.[9]

But Katharine Byron had her own marquee speakers and a built-in edge in party registration. In campaign appearances with nationally known Democrats like First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Representative Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, Byron endorsed U.S. support for nations fighting against the Nazis and recommended greater military preparedness. Byron, the state's first woman candidate for Congress, proved a durable campaigner and rallied the support of women's Democratic groups.[10] Two days before the election, Eleanor Roosevelt swung through the district to provide her unqualified endorsement for Byron. "Her popularity in Government circles and her contacts in Washington will prove a real benefit to her constituents," Roosevelt assured voters. "We need not only more women in Congress but more Representatives of the high qualifications possessed by Katharine Byron."[11] The widow candidate also benefited from a 4–1 advantage in registered Democrats within the district. She closed the campaign with a "caravan tour" in Stewart's stronghold in Alleghany and Garrett counties, which included musical performances by three of her sons, who offered a rendition of a song they called "Beautiful Ka-a-aty."[12] On May 27, 1941, Byron defeated Stewart by an even slenderer margin than had her husband, a little more than 1,000 votes. "My election, I feel, is a very fitting tribute to my late husband and it is my only hope to do the utmost to carry on the work he has begun," she told reporters on election night.[13] On June 11, 1941, Katharine Byron was sworn in as U.S. Representative and assigned to the Civil Service and War Claims committees.

Katharine Byron's career in the House was shaped by international exigencies which produced a climate far different from that when her husband had won election as a Democrat just a few years earlier. Most of her 18 months in office were devoted to issues arising from American aid to nations fighting Nazi Germany and, then, U.S. intervention in the Second World War. In a debate on the amendment to the Neutrality Act in November 1941, Byron urged her colleagues to accelerate the delivery of war material to Great Britain and the Soviet Union by repealing the neutrality law that forbade American ships from delivering such equipment to belligerents. On the House Floor she recounted a conversation with her only draft-age son, William. "How should I vote?" she asked him. "Mother, there is only one thing to do and that is to vote for the repeal of the act, and I will be very proud of you," he replied. She added, "I feel it is my duty to my sons, to my late husband, and to those I represent to vote for this measure so that our country will remain the democracy it is today and not be dominated by Hitler."[14] That same month she christened the Liberty Fleet freighter *Francis Scott Key* at a Baltimore shipyard. Three weeks later, on 8 December, the day following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas recognized Byron and four other Representatives to declare on the House Floor their support for a declaration of war. "I am willing to give my sons to their country's defense," Byron told colleagues. "I am 100 percent in favor of avenging the wrong done our country and maintaining our country's honor. We must go into this thing

to beat the Japanese aggressor. I shall do everything by voice, by vote, everything within my power to bring about this end."[15]

The war shaped Byron's subsequent work, even where she dealt with issues of local interest. In 1942 she argued for the maintenance of Works Projects Administration (WPA) programs within her district as a necessary adjunct to national defense projects. WPA funds were supporting the construction of two airfields in the district as well as the housing and childcare needs of construction workers and their families. "We have many projects started in the district very necessary to the defense program," Bryon said, "and if these had to be abandoned it would endanger our war effort."[16]

Contrary to her earlier promise not to seek re-election, Congresswoman Byron filed for the Democratic primary in the summer of 1942, but she withdrew shortly thereafter, leaving the nomination to Lieutenant Colonel E. Brooke Lee, who eventually lost in the general election.[17] Byron had already delivered her first campaign speech, in William D. Byron Park in Williamsport, when a call went out for women to support the war effort. Her governess, a registered nurse, decided to quit and volunteer as a military nurse. Byron later claimed that she could neither stand in the way of that decision nor find a replacement and, thus, abandoned her re-election campaign to take care of her children, the youngest of whom was five.[18] In October 1947, she married Samuel Bynum Riddick, head of public relations for the Federal Housing Administration.[19] Much of Byron's postcongressional career was spent as a Red Cross volunteer. In 1970, Katharine Byron took to the campaign trail again, helping her son, Goodloe Byron, win election to the U.S. House in a district that covered much of the region that hers had 30 years earlier.[20] Katharine Byron, still active in the capital's elite social circuit, died in Georgetown on December 28, 1976.

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Veronica Grace Boland
1899–1982

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM PENNSYLVANIA
1942–1943

The first woman to serve in Congress from Pennsylvania, Veronica Grace Boland, only served for two months, completing the term of her late husband, Patrick J. Boland, the popular Democratic Whip, who had died just before winning a primary election. "I've always preferred the background," Congresswoman Boland had told the press upon her election.[1] But her victory served as a tribute to her husband. Postmaster General Frank C. Walker, a family friend, told the *Scranton Tribune* that her election "came as a deserved recognition of Mr. Boland's long public service."[2]

Veronica Grace Barrett was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, on March 18, 1899, a daughter of Patrick and Winifred Barrett, immigrants from Ireland. She graduated from the Scranton Technical High School in 1918. She later married Patrick J. Boland, a carpenter and building contractor. They had two sons: Patrick, Jr., and Eugene. Patrick Boland went on to a political career, elected to Scranton's city council and school board before serving as Lackawanna County commissioner from 1915 to 1919. In 1930 he was elected to a House seat as the nominee of the Republican, Democratic, and Labor parties. This left Boland free to choose which party caucus to join. He chose to organize with the Democratic Caucus, which held a narrow majority in the 72nd Congress (1931–1933). By his third term, Boland became Democratic Whip and was briefly a contender for Democratic Leader against Representative John McCormack of Massachusetts, the eventual winner, in 1940.[3] Senator Joseph F. Guffey, the Democratic leader of Pennsylvania, made retention of Boland as Whip a condition before throwing the state's House delegation behind Sam Rayburn of Texas in his run for House Speaker in 1937.[4] Boland was credited with creating an effective Whip organization, and he was praised for his ability to determine how a vote would come out quickly and accurately. One of his triumphs was assisting Speaker Rayburn to extend the selective service system by one vote just months before the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941.[5]

On May 18, 1942, Patrick Boland died suddenly of a heart attack at home in Scranton, the morning before he won nomination in the Pennsylvania primaries for another House term. Majority Leader McCormack announced Boland's death by suggesting that wartime demands had made Boland "a casualty of the present conflict."[6] His death came at a time when Pennsylvania politics were quite volatile. New Deal policies had made the Democrats competitive in this predominantly Republican state, and the Democrats were particularly concerned with avoiding any potential fractures in their ranks.[7] The executive committee of the Pennsylvania Democratic Committee turned to Veronica Boland, Patrick's wife, to fill his unexpired term on June 5, 1942. Running unopposed, she won November 3, during the first congressional elections held after American intervention in World War II. "I really can't get excited about it," Boland told a group of reporters upon her election as Pennsylvania's first woman Representative. "I would rather have Mr. Boland there, of course."[8] She chose not to run for a full term to the 78th Congress (1943–1945), an election that was held the same day as her special election. At the same time, her willingness to serve out her husband's term bought the party's executive committee some time to settle upon a more experienced candidate for the next Congress.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., MEMORIAL LIBRARY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

"I've always preferred the background," Congresswoman Boland told the press upon her election. Boland was sworn in and seated on November 19, 1942, less than a month before the 77th Congress adjourned. As a consequence, she received no committee assignments and made no floor speeches.

Boland was sworn in and seated on November 19, 1942, less than a month before Congress adjourned on December 16.[9] As a consequence, she received no committee assignments and made no floor speeches.

After retiring from Congress, Veronica Boland returned to Scranton and worked as an executive secretary for the Dutch Manufacturing Company until 1957. She retired when she underwent eye surgery.[10] Boland died in Scranton on June 19, 1982.

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Clare Boothe Luce
1903–1987

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM CONNECTICUT
1943–1947

Clare Boothe Luce conquered the political sphere in much the same way that she stormed the publishing industry and elite society—with quick intelligence, a biting wit, and a knack for publicity that, along with her celebrity and beauty, made her a media darling. Luce won a Connecticut U.S. House seat in 1942, despite never having stood for elective office. Though she was critical of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Luce's internationalist bent led her to back the broad outlines of the administration's plans for the postwar world. She once described her philosophy as, "America first but not only."[1]

Clare Ann Boothe was born on April 10, 1903, in New York City, to William Boothe and Ann Clare Snyder Boothe, both involved with the theater. The family moved from New York City to Memphis, Tennessee, but after her parents divorced in 1913, Clare, her mother, and her brother, David, returned to New York City to build a new life. To help pay bills, Clare worked in several play productions and did not attend school until she was 12, studying at the Cathedral School of St. Mary on Long Island and at Miss Mason's School in Tarrytown. Her mother eventually married Albert Austin, a wealthy doctor who later served in the Connecticut state legislature and the U.S. House. In 1923, Clare Boothe married George Brokaw, scion of a clothing fortune. They had one daughter, Ann Clare, but were divorced in 1929. Clare set her sights on writing and was hired by publisher Conde Nast at *Vogue*. By 1933 she served as managing editor at Nast's *Vanity Fair* magazine. On November 21, 1935, Clare Boothe married Henry R. Luce, founder of *Time, Life*, and *Fortune* magazines. Shortly thereafter Clare Boothe Luce came into her own as a successful playwright. In 1936, she wrote a Broadway hit, *The Women* (1936), a satire about the lives of idle rich women. Other commercial successes followed. When war broke out in Europe, she toured the world as a *Life* correspondent. Luce eventually wrote dispatches from the North African and Chinese theaters.

Clare Boothe Luce's interest in politics developed during the Great Depression. In 1932, she worked as the executive secretary of the National Party, which united conservatives with moderately liberal plans for rescuing the economy. Through her relationship with the financier Bernard Baruch, Luce for a brief time became a Franklin Roosevelt supporter. She eventually broke with the FDR administration over New Deal economic programs. Her first active participation in Republican politics came with her energetic support of Wendell Willkie's 1940 presidential campaign. Her travels during World War II changed the focus of her criticisms of FDR from domestic to foreign policies. By 1942, Connecticut political leaders lobbied Luce to run for a U.S. House seat encompassing Fairfield County and the wealthy town of Greenwich, where Luce had a home. Initially reluctant because she thought she did not possess a temperament suited to politics and was unfamiliar with the district, she later accepted.[2] In the GOP primary, opponents attacked her as a carpetbagger but she prevailed at the nominating meeting by a nearly unanimous vote.[3] Luce based her platform on three goals: "One, to win the war. Two, to prosecute that war as loyally and effectively as we can as Republicans. Three, to bring about a better world and a durable peace, with special attention to post-war security and employment here at home."[4]

In the general election she ran against Democratic incumbent Leroy Downs, a local newspaper publisher who had defeated her stepfather, Albert Austin, in 1940.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

She dismissed Downs as a Roosevelt "rubber stamp."[5] Nevertheless, her internationalist orientation differentiated Luce from isolationists. On that basis the influential syndicated columnist and FDR supporter Dorothy Thompson endorsed Luce.[6] Former GOP presidential candidate Wendell Willkie also campaigned for her.[7] With support from labor unions, Downs held his core Democratic voters together, but Luce defeated him by a 46 to 42 percent margin.[8] If Socialist candidate David Mansell had not skimmed away 15,000 votes that likely would have gone to Downs, Luce would not have been elected. Still, she portrayed her victory as a mandate. "I have campaigned for fighting a hard war—not a soft war," Luce declared. "Therefore this election proves how the American people want to fight this war. . . . They want to fight it efficiently and without bungling. They want to fight it in an honorable, all-out, plain-spoken partnership with our Allies."[9]

Luce originally hoped to get a seat on the Foreign Affairs Committee, but Republican Minority Leader Joe Martin steered her onto the Committee on Military Affairs. Impatient with the arduous process of creating and passing legislation, she used her Military Affairs assignment as a soapbox from which to criticize the wartime policies of the Roosevelt administration. Her first floor speech attracted half the House Members—an unprecedented draw for even the most powerful veteran. In an address entitled "America in the Postwar Air World," Luce advocated postwar U.S. air dominance, both commercial and military. In the same way that the British Navy controlled the world's oceans in the 19th century, Luce suggested, U.S. airpower would control global airspace. She warned against British and Russian competition and attacked the administration's "freedom of the skies" plan for postwar international aviation cooperation as "globaloney."[10] The speech had the effect Luce seemed to intend, stirring domestic and foreign controversy.[11] From London, Member of Parliament Lady Astor mused, "People who start out to be sensational usually don't last long."[12] Luce later clarified that she believed "every nation has sovereignty of its skies" and that the U.S. must extend aid to allied nations to reinvigorate the aviation industry and spur competition.[13]

Despite her status as a leading GOP spokesperson, Luce voted to support the general outlines of FDR's foreign policy. She described an Anglo-American bilateral alliance as the "foundation stone" of any postwar international organization.[14] She supported the so-called Fulbright Resolution in 1943, sponsored by Representative J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, which envisioned American participation in a postwar international organization—later the United Nations. She introduced resolutions to study the problem of postwar refugees and to create a U.N. agency to oversee arms control.[15] Unlike isolationist Republicans in the House, Luce backed American involvement in the United Nations Refugee Relief Agency, though she wanted separate U.S. oversight of aid distribution in recipient countries.[16] Luce also supported the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.[17]

On domestic policy, Congresswoman Luce was more centrist than her rhetoric implied. In 1943, she supported the Equal Rights Amendment on the 20th anniversary of its introduction in the House. Luce also endorsed the development of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, arguing that, "We have always been fighting women and never afraid to do our part."[18] She advocated a heavy wartime tax on the rich: "those who can afford it, the well-to-do and the rich, must be taxed almost to the constitutional point of confiscation."[19] In 1946, Luce introduced a bill to create a Labor Department bureau to ensure women and minority workers equal pay for equal work.[20]

Republican leaders most valued Luce for her wit, sharp intellect, and ability to turn a phrase, especially when singling out Roosevelt's policies for criticism. Party leaders selected Luce as the keynote speaker at the 1944 Republican National Convention in Chicago, the first woman so honored by either party. Her "G.I. Joe and G.I. Jim" speech largely consisted of her charge that Roosevelt had been duplicitous in handling foreign policy as war grew imminent in both Europe and Asia, and, through wartime mismanagement, had caused undue American fatalities.[21] Aiming squarely at Roosevelt's habit of making one-man diplomacy, Luce charged that American democracy was "becoming a dictatorial bumbledom."[22]

Luce's re-election bid in the fall of 1944 was buffeted by intraparty fighting, resulting in the abrupt resignation of her top backer, J. Kenneth Bradley, from his GOP state chairmanship.[23] Luce survived the primary and entered the general election against a 29-year-old Democrat challenger—Deputy Secretary of State of Connecticut Margaret E. Connors.[24] Connors attacked Luce as a late and opportunistic convert to the cause of a postwar international organization.[25] Meanwhile, Luce intensified her rhetoric against President Roosevelt during a national speaking tour to support the GOP presidential candidate, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York. Luce declared FDR to be "the only American President who ever lied us into a war because he did not have the political courage to lead us into it," arguing that Roosevelt had not halted the transport of vital strategic materials to imperial Japan soon enough as it waged war against China.[26] She also insisted that from 1933 to 1939, as Hitler and Mussolini rose to power in Europe, FDR was "the world's leading isolationist and appeaser" because he had failed to confront fascism more forcefully.[27] Critics assailed her. Mary Norton, dean of Democratic women in the House, accused Luce of "complete ignorance" of the facts. Vice President Wallace dismissed her as a "sharp-tongued glamour girl of forty" who "when running around the country without a mental protector, 'put her dainty foot in her pretty mouth.'"[28] Connors portrayed Luce's "lies" as proof of her core isolationist beliefs.[29] Connors eventually carried industrial sections of the district by wide margins.[30] In an election year when prominent isolationists such as Hamilton Fish of New York went down to defeat, the Democratic message that conflated Luce's criticisms with isolationism proved potent. Luce barely edged Connors by 49.9 to 48.9 percent. A Socialist candidate polled 2,448 votes, a little more than Luce's margin of victory.[31]

In early 1945, Representative Luce expressed grave concerns about Soviet foreign policy objectives, particularly in Eastern Europe. She traveled to liberated Europe and toured the Buchenwald concentration camp where Nazis had murdered thousands of Jews and Soviet war prisoners. As the German threat receded, Luce perceived a growing menace in Soviet communism. She argued that the Kremlin had "incorporated the Nazi technique of murder" and that Washington should halt the spread of communism in Europe.[32] Returning to the United States, Luce authored a bill to acknowledge American "national responsibility" for the Yalta Agreements of February 1945. Hers was a particularly resonant attack on FDR's compromise with Joseph Stalin over the division of postwar Europe. Recognizing the role the Soviet Army played in crushing German occupation forces in Eastern Europe, FDR had conceded Moscow's sphere of influence in the region. Stalin, whose chief security interest was to prevent another German invasion through a weak Polish state, soon reneged on his promises for free elections and a coalition government in that country. Nevertheless, Luce and other critics described the accords as capitulation on the part of the FDR administration and as "a partition of Poland and overthrow of its friendly, recognized constitutional Government."[33] Her position played well in her district, home to a large Polish and Eastern European community.

Luce's interest in political office, however, steadily eroded. In January 1944, her daughter, Ann, a student at Stanford University, died in an auto wreck.[34] Friends noted that the tragedy sent Luce on a three-year search for closure and greatly diminished her enthusiasm for politics. In January 1946 she declined to run for re-election and retired in January 1947.[35] She did not, however, drop out of politics. Luce addressed the 1948 Republican National Convention.[36] In 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed her U.S. Ambassador to Italy, making her the fifth woman to represent the United States in a foreign country and the first posted to a major European nation.[37] She served until 1957, eventually arranging a conference that settled the disposition of Trieste, a city on the Adriatic Sea, claimed by both Italy and Yugoslavia. In 1959, she was confirmed overwhelmingly to become the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil. But, following a bitter public exchange with Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon that undermined her standing, she resigned her ambassadorship after just three days.[38] The Luces settled in

Honolulu, Hawaii, where Clare remained after Henry's death in 1967. In 1983, she accepted a post on President Ronald Reagan's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom as "a persistent and effective advocate of freedom, both at home and abroad." After a long battle with cancer, Clare Boothe Luce died on October 9, 1987, in Washington, D.C. Upon her death, the *Washington Post*, which often stood at odds with Luce's politics, eulogized her. "She raised early feminist hell. To the end she said things others wouldn't dare to—cleverly and wickedly—and seemed only to enjoy the resulting fracas . . . Unlike so many of her fellow Washingtonians she was neither fearful nor ashamed of what she meant to say."[39]

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MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), Manuscript Division. *Papers*: ca. 1930–1987, 319 linear feet. The papers of Clare Boothe Luce include correspondence (1914–1987) particularly relating to politics, religion, and literary and artistic endeavors; secretarial file (1933–1987); literary file (1919–1987) containing business records, articles, essays, reviews, commentaries, journals, notebooks, memoirs, novels, short stories, plays, nonfiction writings; congressional and ambassadorial correspondence and subject files; Booth and Luce family and personal papers; speech files scrapbooks (141 volumes); and other papers. The collection (dating chiefly from 1930 to 1987) documents Clare Boothe Luce's multifaceted career. Topics in the papers include diplomacy, intelligence service, international relations, national defense and security, public roles for women, and Luce's conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1946. A finding aid is available in the library and online.

NOTES

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Winifred Claire Stanley
1909–1996

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEW YORK
1943–1945

During her one term as a New York Congresswoman, Winifred Stanley tirelessly championed women's rights. The former prosecutor and the first female assistant district attorney in Erie County, New York, urged Americans to contemplate and begin planning for the imperatives of peacetime demobilization and new international responsibilities after World War II.

Winifred Stanley was born on August 14, 1909, in the Bronx, New York. The eldest of six children, she was raised by her mother, Mary, who once was an English and a music teacher, and her father, architect John Francis Stanley, in Buffalo, New York. Winifred Stanley graduated from Lafayette High School and earned her bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Buffalo in 1930. Stanley went on to receive her L.L.B. and J.D. from the same institution in 1933, graduating first in her class. In 1934, she commenced her law practice.

Stanley's reputation as a lawyer was impeccable, but her greatest precongressional accomplishment proved to be the root of her future defense of women's rights while serving in Congress. When going to court one morning, she found the courtroom closed to women because of the nature of the crime being tried. She considered this an intolerable affront to women, especially because her gender also had been barred from New York juries, regardless of the crime. Stanley considered jury duty "second in importance only to the right to vote" and mobilized women's clubs, church societies, and political organizations to press for women's right to participate in the courtroom as citizen peers.[1] Her actions not only won the right for participation on a jury panel for women in New York but also caught the attention of then-District Attorney Leo J. Hagerty. He subsequently named 28-year-old Stanley the first female assistant district attorney of Erie County.

Following the 1940 Census, New York stood to lose two seats in Congress. The Republican Party searched for an effective short-term Representative to win the state's At-Large seat slated for elimination. Once redistricting occurred, their ideal candidate would choose not to run against a higher-ranking Republican in the following election. Winifred Stanley, by then a successful assistant district attorney, was the perfect choice. Stanley was elected to the 78th Congress (1943–1945) in 1942, winning in a landslide and topping eight other candidates with a final total of nearly two million votes.[2]

With a strong legal background, she sought a spot on the Judiciary Committee. Despite her qualifications, the Congresswoman was denied a position because she lacked seniority and because sexism still prevailed among her mostly male colleagues. James W. Wadsworth, Jr., a New York Representative in charge of committee assignments, flatly opposed women in the workplace. He believed that, "a woman's place is in the home."[3] Other Republican leaders seemed disinclined to assist Stanley, perhaps because of her short-term status.[4] Instead of the Judiciary Committee, she was appointed to the Patents and Civil Service committees, both lower-rung panels.[5]

The imminent end of World War II created the challenge for the 78th Congress to provide for victory and plan for the subsequent peace. Citing the overwhelming support of her constituents, Stanley supported economist Beardsley Ruml's plan in 1943—a suggestion to forgive all 1942 federal income taxes, while instating a withholding tax on all 1943 wages.[6] The withheld tax would allow for a quick source of revenue for the federal government's war effort,

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

and Americans would not have to pay the previous year's taxes alongside their present dues.

Stanley also gained a reputation for being a pragmatic postwar planner who was more interested in the "prose" of the readjustment to peacetime, than in the "poetry" of victory.[7] She commented that, "Maintaining peace is like maintaining democracy. It's a full time job."[8] On January 24, 1944, Stanley introduced a concurrent resolution calling for a special joint committee to deal with postwar employment. Citing the national problem of returning soldiers who would flood the job market, she insisted that the committee be bipartisan and consist of Members from different parts of the country.[9] In a speech on the House Floor, she also proposed a resolution in support of an American delegation to the proposed United Nations.[10] In addition, Stanley looked out for the interests of war veterans and her constituents by pushing for the establishment of more Veterans' Administration hospitals in upstate New York.

Stanley continued to advocate women's rights during her congressional service, becoming the first Member of Congress to introduce an equal pay for equal work bill. On June 19, 1944, Stanley proposed a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to make it unlawful "to discriminate against any employee, in the rate of compensation paid, on account of sex."[11] She wanted to maintain in "peacetime the drive and energy which women have contributed to the war effort" and further declared that, "we shall only be paying lip service to those glorious and fundamental guarantees of our nation's heritage."[12] She vigorously worked for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to both the U.S. Congress and the New York state constitution. Along with Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, Stanley was one of the first House Members to push for a renewed effort at passing ERA in 1943, the 20th anniversary of its introduction in the House.[13] In addition, she argued that women should be commissioned as surgeons in the U.S. Army. "It has often been remarked that this is a 'man's world,'" she once noted, "It's 'our world,' and this battered old universe needs and will need the best brains and the ability of both men and women."[14] Stanley also introduced a joint resolution calling for a constitutional amendment to eliminate the poll tax, and she also backed increasing wages for postal employees.[15]

In line with her party, Congresswoman Stanley was a vocal critic of the Roosevelt administration's New Deal programs. During the 1944 campaign, while losing her own seat to reapportionment, she nevertheless remained busy, taking to the campaign trail in 15 states to urge election of the GOP presidential candidate, New York Governor Thomas Dewey. During one rally, Stanley told the crowd: "American voters are sick of the New Deal's mismanagement, which results in two agencies doing the work of one. They are tired of the countless alphabetical agencies and bureaus which have sprung up like mushrooms. They want the alphabet given back to the children. They want the Government of this country restored to the people. They want intelligence and integrity restored to the White House."[16] Stanley, however, was not above urging government intervention when New York's interests were at stake. In February 1943, responding to a meat shortage crisis in New York City, Stanley asked the wartime Office of Price Administration to aid independent meat packers who were suffering from high livestock prices.[17]

Despite her reputation as a tenacious worker, Stanley also was active in the Washington, D.C., social scene. She received a Fashion Academy Award for being one of the nation's best-dressed public women. She also served as an adviser to the "Eight Girls to Every Man" club, an organization finding homes and proper social engagements for young women working for the federal government.[18] Rumor linked Stanley romantically with Republican Whip, Congressman Leslie Arends of Illinois. Both parties publicly denied any such relationship.[19]

After leaving Congress in 1945, Stanley accepted an appointment in New York Governor Dewey's administration. She was later appointed counsel for the State Employees Retirement System and subsequently returned to the position of assistant district attorney, this time in the Albany office of the state law department. She retired from state service in 1979 but remained in private practice

until 1986. After a brief illness, Winifred Stanley died on February 29, 1996, in Kenmore, New York.

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NOTES

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Willa Lybrand Fulmer
1884–1968

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA
1944–1945

Like several other congressional widows from the South, Willa Lybrand Fulmer filled her late husband's seat long enough for party officials to successfully insert a long-term successor. Mrs. Fulmer did not participate actively in the long career of her powerful husband, Hampton P. Fulmer, author of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) of 1933. But her name recognition with voters secured her a short term in the final months of the 78th Congress (1943–1945), helping to preserve a narrow Democratic majority in the House.

Willa Essie Lybrand was born in Wagener, South Carolina, on February 3, 1884. She attended public schools in Wagener and the Greenville Female Seminary. In 1901, at age 17, she married Hampton Pitts Fulmer, a successful cotton farmer, merchant, and banker. Hampton Fulmer would eventually serve in the South Carolina state house and then go on to a 23-year career in the U.S. House of Representatives that included the chairmanship of the influential Agriculture Committee. Congressman Fulmer was a tireless advocate for farmers and a major figure in New Deal efforts to alleviate their economic woes. He authored the AAA, which dealt with the problem of low farm commodities prices by controlling surplus crops and providing low-interest farm mortgage refinancing. Congressman Fulmer also authored the U.S. Cotton Grading Act, which standardized cotton-grading methods and he was well-known for helping to draft a $1.3 billion bill to build a national veterans' hospital network.[1] Willa Fulmer raised their three daughters—Margie, Ruby, and Willa—and, by the 1930s, was a fixture at many capital society events. Although she and her husband maintained a home in Orangeburg, South Carolina, Mrs. Fulmer spent much of her time in Washington, D.C., where two of her daughters settled into married life. On a roster of Representatives with family members working in their congressional offices, the name Willa Fulmer appears as an aide to Congressman Fulmer in the early 1930s; she earned $266 dollars per month, which put her in the upper salary bracket for Capitol Hill staff at the time.[2]

The day after Hampton Fulmer died suddenly of a heart attack on October 19, 1944, South Carolina Democratic officials phoned Willa Fulmer to ask her to run in a special election to fill her husband's vacant seat, which encompassed six counties in the southeastern part of the state, including the city of Orangeburg.[3] Congressman Fulmer's death had reduced the Democratic advantage in the closely divided House to just two seats, sending party leaders scrambling for a sure-fire successor for the remainder of the 78th Congress. But the process was complicated because Congressman Fulmer had already been nominated, and his death occurred less than three weeks before the general election. Party leaders were forced to call a nominating convention for November 1, a week before the general election.

From the start, it was clear that Willa Fulmer would be a placeholder. While agreeing to seek the nomination, she stated she had no intention of running in the concurrent election for the following Congress. Fulmer later recalled that she acquiesced to the party's wishes but "with a deep sense of improbability."[4] She had never been active in her husband's political career and had little desire to pursue a public career. In the November 1, special primary, she ran unopposed for the short term in the final two months of the 78th Congress.[5] For years the widely popular Hampton Fulmer had run unopposed, easily winning the Democratic

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The *Washington Post* described Congresswoman Willa Fulmer as "more of a southern gentlewoman than a career type," who, nevertheless, "surprises you with her knowledge of politics and world events."

nominations which, in the one-party South, were tantamount to winning the general election. While Willa Fulmer ran unopposed and enjoyed name recognition among the constituency whom her husband had served for nearly a quarter century, voter participation in the November 7 special election was extremely low; she received 7,943 votes out of the district with a population of nearly 362,000.[6] Also on that November 7 ballot was the contest for the full term in the 79th Congress (1945–1947); the winning candidate, Democrat John J. Riley, received nearly 20,000 votes (97 percent) against his GOP challenger.

Days before Congresswoman Fulmer was sworn in on November 16, 1944, the *Washington Post* described her as "more of a southern gentlewoman than a career type," who, nevertheless, "surprises you with her knowledge of politics and world events."[7] Whatever her aptitude for the job, however, Willa Fulmer never got a chance to demonstrate her abilities. Events were so rushed, that when House Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas administered the oath of office to Representative Willa Fulmer on November 16, her election credentials had not yet arrived from South Carolina. Thus, Representative James P. Richards of South Carolina asked special permission from his colleagues to conduct the swearing-in; they consented.[8] She moved into her husband's Cannon House Office Building quarters, but during her lame duck term, Representative Fulmer made no floor speeches and received no committee assignments. Congress adjourned a month after she took her seat.

Fulmer's two-month term ended on January 3, 1945, when John J. Riley was sworn into Congress as the district's new Representative—the first of his eight straight terms in the House. Mrs. Fulmer returned to private life, retiring to a home in northwest Washington, D.C.[9] She returned occasionally to South Carolina, engaged in agricultural pursuits, and also became an avid traveler. Willa Lybrand Fulmer died aboard a luxury liner en route to Europe on May 13, 1968.

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Emily Taft Douglas
1899–1994

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM ILLINOIS
1945–1947

In 1944, Emily Taft Douglas, a proponent of overseas humanitarian projects and a postwar United Nations Organization, defeated one of the most strident isolationists in the House of Representatives—heralding, as some observers believed, the triumph of American internationalism. "We, ourselves, must have faith in the doctrine of collective security as a bulwark against another war and chaos," Representative Douglas said. "We must be prepared to make whatever compromises and sacrifices that security demands."[1]

Emily Taft was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 10, 1899, one of three daughters of the famous sculptor Larado Taft and Ada Bartlett Taft. President William Howard Taft was a distant cousin. She grew up in Chicago and traveled widely with her father during his frequent lecture and teaching tours in the United States and Europe. President Woodrow Wilson's effort to coax the United States into the League of Nations, though unsuccessful, convinced Emily Taft to register as a Democrat.[2] She graduated with honors a year early, in 1920, from the University of Chicago, with a B.A. in economics and political science. After graduating, she embarked on a theatrical career. She studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Art in New York City. Emily Taft joined national theatrical tours, winning acclaim as the lead in a Broadway production of *The Cat and the Canary*. She also became active in Illinois politics, as a protégé of pioneer women state legislators.[3] She served as the organizing secretary for the Illinois League of Women Voters and, in that capacity, met her future husband, Paul Douglas, a University of Chicago economics professor and future U.S. Senator. They married in 1931 and raised one daughter, Jean.

The Douglases took up the internationalist cause after a 1935 trip to Europe convinced them of the dangers of fascism in Benito Mussolini's Italy and Adolf Hitler's Germany. The couple returned to Chicago, where they began a public campaign to warn fellow citizens about the growing menace in Europe. In 1938, Paul Douglas won election as a Chicago alderman, and in 1942 he mounted an unsuccessful campaign as an independent Democrat for a U.S. Senate seat from Illinois. Ten days later, Paul Douglas enlisted in the Marines as a 50-year-old private, where he served in the Pacific theater in World War II and became a decorated combat veteran. Emily Douglas returned from the 1935 trip abroad to organize and chair the government and foreign policy department of the Illinois League of Women Voters. In 1942, she became executive secretary of the International Relations Center in Chicago. During the war, she also traveled widely to raise funds for the Red Cross organization.

It was Douglas's work as an advocate of internationalism, touring the state and the country, which brought her into her first campaign for public office. Illinois Democratic leaders approached Douglas to run for the state's lone At-Large seat (with what was then the fourth-largest constituency in the nation) in the winter of 1943–1944. Douglas was shocked by the proposal, recalling that her first response was, "Gentlemen, this is so sudden!"[4] In February 1944, after turning down the initial offer, Douglas reconsidered and accepted and won the Democratic primary. In the general election, she challenged two-term incumbent Republican Stephen A. Day, a staunch isolationist. Day was controversial even among the party faithful for his Nazi sympathies and his authorship of a 1941 book, *We Must Save the Republic Now*, which argued against intervention in the European war.[5] Day enjoyed an enormous media advantage with the endorsement of the anti-FDR *Chicago Tribune* and its powerful publisher, Colonel

Robert McCormick. Douglas charged that "by his voting record [Day] stands convicted as the worst obstructionist in Congress."[6] Douglas also ran as a supporter of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs and foreign policies, including his plan for American participation in the postwar United Nations organization. Observers speculated that Douglas would have to ride FDR's coattails to win her seat; in fact, she defeated Day by a greater margin than FDR's over GOP presidential candidate Thomas Dewey, taking 52 percent of the vote, with most of her support concentrated in Chicago. "Building a permanent, workable peace is the big job of this generation," Douglas said shortly afterward. "It is evident that the electorate made a definite decision to get rid of extreme isolationists and obstructionists."[7] Syndicated columnist Marquis Childs hailed her victory as symbolizing the receding of isolationism," in some ways more significant than the defeat of [isolationist Representative] Ham Fish in New York."[8]

Representative Douglas registered her greatest influence in international relations. She received her lone committee assignment on Foreign Affairs and was widely recognized as a specialist in the field. Douglas became a forceful and erudite proponent of the Dumbarton Oaks plan for the creation of the United Nations. "My election was, without question, a mandate from the people of Illinois for the ideal of world cooperation," Douglas told the *New York Times*. "In Congress, and especially in my work on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am going to proceed on the thesis that the will to get along with the other nations of the world is of greater importance than the machinery. Failure to see that, I think, lies at the root of our not having achieved a permanent peace after the last war."[9] In marked contrast to her isolationist Illinois colleague, Jessie Sumner, Douglas voted with the vast majority of the House to support the United Nations and the Bretton Woods Agreements, which established the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Along with California Representative Jerry Voorhis, she proposed legislation to put the United Nations in charge of international programs for arms control and the abolition of atomic weaponry. "With our new powers of destruction so vast and immediate, we have no time for fumbling," Douglas said in a floor speech. "The ominous race must be halted at once. . . . The speed and firmness with which the [United Nations] acts, may determine the fate of mankind."[10]

Having worked on behalf of the Red Cross during the war, she was an ardent supporter of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), which provided food, shelter, and clothing to millions of displaced European postwar refugees. In August 1945, she joined several committee colleagues on a visit to Europe to inspect the work of UNNRA, particularly in occupied Germany and Italy. The spectacle of devastation in Europe convinced her that UNRRA, backed principally by American dollars, had a crucial role to play in the early reconstruction of the continent. "As the only major power which was neither bombed nor invaded, we must bear the chief burden of relief," Douglas declared during House debates in the late fall of 1945. Furthermore, she believed UNRRA was the first experiment in making the international organization a reality. "Before men can cooperate politically, they must have bread, shelter, clothes, and medical care," Douglas said in a floor speech. "By meeting elemental needs, the United Nations can save the lives of millions, [and] undermine the pull of violent nationalisms which emerge like fascism after every war."[11] Based on her visit to a refugee camp, she later proposed a program for the rehabilitation of European youth who were reared under fascist regimes. In the spring of 1946, as the threat of famine hung over Western Europe, Douglas urged Americans to return to wartime rationing to save food for donations.[12]

In the 1946 midterm elections, Douglas's re-election campaign was seen as a bellwether race for the state and for Democrats nationally. Her opponent was William G. Stratton, a navy veteran and former one-term House Member and a staunch isolationist who pledged opposition to any foreign loans and ran on the GOP platform of lowering taxes and slashing federal expenditures.[13] Douglas ran on a platform which supported President Harry S. Truman's domestic policies and his expanded foreign aid programs. Weary and frustrated by wartime controls, high prices, commodity shortages, and the economic dislocations caused by demobilization, voters took

their anger out on the Truman administration and its Democratic supporters in the House. At the polls, Americans ousted 54 House Democrats, returning control of the chamber to the GOP in the 80th Congress (1947–1949). Among those voted out of office was Douglas, losing 55 to 44 percent to Stratton, who ran a weak second to Douglas in Chicago but carried all but four of the downstate counties. The trend carried over statewide, where Republicans picked up six seats to take 20 of the 26 House delegation spots.[14]

Douglas was active in politics for much of her post congressional life. In 1948, she campaigned on behalf of her husband, Paul, who won election to the first of his three terms as a U.S. Senator from Illinois. Emily Douglas was appointed in 1950 as U.S. Representative to the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an organization for international cultural and scientific exchange that she had supported during her House career.[15] She later served on the legislative committee of the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice and as vice president and moderator of the American Unitarian Association, its highest lay office. In 1965, she marched in the Selma, Alabama, civil rights protest with the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Emily Douglas also authored several books during her lifetime, including *Margaret Sanger* (1970), a biography of the pioneer in family planning, and *Remember the Ladies* (1966), a book of essays on famous American women. After Paul Douglas died in 1976, she resided in White Plains, New York, where she passed away on January 28, 1994.

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14 "Illinois GOP Wins 5 Congress Seats," 7 November 1946, *New York Times*: 9.
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Helen Gahagan Douglas
1900–1980

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM CALIFORNIA
1945–1951

Decades before Ronald Reagan, stage star and California celebrity Helen Gahagan Douglas made the transition from acting to politics to become one of her party's standard-bearers. In an era when Cold War priorities often marginalized domestic reforms, Douglas became a beacon to New Deal liberals, who hoped to push economic and social legislation into the post–World War II period.[1] Impatient with the institutional pace and intricacies of the House, Representative Douglas used her skills as an actress and her fame to speak passionately about topics ranging from equal rights for women to civil rights for African Americans and protections for the American worker.

Helen Gahagan was born in Boonton, New Jersey, on November 25, 1900, one of five children raised by Walter Hamer Gahagan II and Lillian Rose Mussen Gahagan. Her father owned a prosperous construction and shipyard business, and the family lived in the upper-middle-class section of Park Slope in Brooklyn, New York. Helen Gahagan attended the prestigious Berkeley School for Girls in Brooklyn. She later studied at the Capen School for Girls in Northampton, Massachusetts, and then at Barnard College in New York City. Against her father's wishes, Gahagan left school before earning a degree. From 1922 to 1938, she pursued a career as an opera singer and an actress, starring in a variety of shows and plays. In a 1930 Broadway hit, *Tonight or Never*, Helen Gahagan met and costarred with her future husband, Melvyn Douglas. They married on April 5, 1931, and left New York City to relocate in Los Angeles as Melvyn pursued a film career. There, the Douglases raised two children, Peter and Mary Helen.

The move west, made in the early years of the Great Depression, exposed Helen Douglas to the suffering and deprivations wreaked by a disastrous drought and economic crash. It also inspired her to become active in public service on behalf of migrant farm workers and others whom the Depression had dislocated. "I became active in politics because I saw the possibility, if we all sat back and did nothing, of a world in which there would no longer be any stages for actors to act on," she recalled.[2] Domestic woes were compounded by foreign dangers. Douglas and her husband traveled frequently and witnessed firsthand Japanese militarism and European fascism in the 1930s.[3] With international tensions on the rise, Helen Douglas set entertainment work aside and threw herself into public-service projects, becoming a member of the national advisory committee of the Works Progress Administration and a member of the California state committee of the National Youth Administration. She traveled frequently to the White House to meet with Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1940, she became a California Democratic national committeewoman—a post she held until 1944—serving as the vice chair of the California Democratic central committee and as head of the women's division. From 1942 to 1943, she was on the board of the California Housing and Planning Association.

In 1944, when six-term incumbent Democrat Thomas Ford announced he would retire from his seat encompassing downtown Los Angeles, Douglas entered the race to succeed her political ally. With Ford's endorsement, she prevailed in the primary as the only woman among eight candidates, receiving more than 14,000 votes, versus about 5,200 for the runner-up.[4] In the general election, Douglas appealed to African-American voters in her urban district. Her platform called for equal rights, labor rights, food subsidies, unemployment insurance for

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returning GIs, a revitalized farm security program, and income-based taxation for farmers and small business owners. She also advocated international cooperation. Her candidacy drew attention to equality for women. When asked about a woman's place in Congress, Douglas replied, "Politics is a job that needs doing—by anyone who is interested enough to train for it and work at it. It's like housekeeping; someone has to do it. Whether the job is done by men or women is not important—only whether the job is done well or badly."[5] Douglas ultimately prevailed over her Republican opponent, William D. Campbell, by a slim margin, 51.5 to 48.5 percent. As she established a reputation in the House, Douglas's electoral support increased. In her subsequent bids for re-election in 1946 and 1948, she defeated her GOP challengers with 54 percent and 65 percent, respectively.[6]

Douglas had little interest in mastering legislative processes, preferring instead to call attention to her agenda while using her celebrity to gain public exposure and awareness for specific programs.[7] Her busy congressional schedule was complemented by an equally hectic speech-making itinerary around the country. Repeatedly during her congressional years, Douglas acted as a publicist for key liberal issues by making major speeches, both on and away from the House Floor, on issues ranging from postwar price controls to civil rights to the international regulation of atomic energy.

Douglas's sole committee assignment throughout her six years in the House reflected one of her many areas of focus: Foreign Affairs. At the center of her philosophy on U.S. foreign policy was Douglas's abiding internationalism. Douglas believed that America's dominant military and economic "strength carries responsibilities and obligations which we must fulfill."[8] Consequently, she backed American participation in the United Nations, supported the implementation of the Bretton Woods Agreements, which created the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and consistently challenged U.S. policy early in the Cold War which, she believed, contributed to tensions with the Soviet Union. Douglas also supported Philippine independence and the creation of a Jewish state in Israel.[9] President Harry S. Truman appointed her as an alternate U.S. Delegate to the United Nations Assembly.

In early October 1945, as debate raged over control and oversight of atomic energy, Douglas weighed in with a major floor speech that called for civilian, rather than military, control over the developing science. "We cannot keep this knowledge to ourselves," she warned. "The air needs to be cleared of suspicion and doubt and fear. The United Nations, through the Security Council, should have the right to find out and know what is going on in every research laboratory in the world."[10] In the winter of 1945–1946, Congresswoman Douglas and Senator Brien McMahon of Connecticut introduced nearly identical bills which aimed at developing peaceful uses of atomic energy through U.S. civilian control. Douglas fought to strike out amendments during House passage which granted far-ranging powers to military developers. Many of these provisions did not appear when the House and Senate versions were reconciled, and the measure was passed in 1946. The Atomic Energy Act created the Atomic Energy Commission, charged with oversight of the development and testing of atomic weapons, as well as with peaceful applications of atomic power.[11]

Douglas's House career also drew from her devotion to domestic priorities, including the continuation of New Deal economic policies and the pursuit of civil rights reform. In 1948, she trooped onto the House Floor toting a bag of groceries, to demonstrate the reduced buying power of housewives after the government lifted wartime price controls.[12] A vocal and consistent defender of labor and unions, Douglas vehemently opposed the Taft–Hartley Act. Officially known as the Labor–Management Relations Act, the bill encompassed a series of amendments to the New Deal-era National Labor Relations Act, weakening the power of organized labor. Among its most controversial provisions was an amendment requiring union leaders to sign loyalty oaths attesting that they were not Communist Party members.[13] Douglas also was a major proponent of federal efforts to provide affordable housing for Americans in the postwar era, an issue central to her constituency in booming California.[14]

During a period when the Jim Crow laws still applied in the nation's capital, Helen Douglas used her outsider status to challenge prevailing racial attitudes. The first white Representative with African Americans on her staff, she also sought to desegregate Capitol restaurants. Douglas also attacked the practice of poll taxes, which effectively prevented many southern African Americans from voting, and she urged passage of antilynching legislation.[15] When Mississippi Democrat John Rankin, chairman of the Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation, charged that black regiments performed incompetently during key World War II battles, Douglas fiercely fought the allegation using military records. African-American servicemen, she reminded colleagues, fought "for a freedom which [they have] not as yet been permitted fully to share."[16]

Douglas's role as a spokesperson for liberal causes made her beloved by liberals and reviled by conservatives. In October 1945, Douglas lashed out at the House Un-American Activities Committee, which was investigating alleged communist sympathizers and which would eventually focus on many Hollywood writers and artists. Douglas argued that such a panel was unconstitutional.[17] Critics charged that she was a communist fellow traveler. Douglas countered that the gravest danger to American society was not the threat of internal, or even external, communist subversion but that of demagoguery and repressive domestic controls justified in the name of national security. "The fear of communism in this country is not rational," Douglas exhorted. "And that irrational fear of communism is being used in many quarters to blind us to our real problems."[18] In her 1948 re-election campaign, Douglas's GOP opponent used redbaiting tactics to try to unseat her. The strategy failed, as she won by the widest margin of her career, but it set a troubling pattern in motion.

In 1950, Representative Douglas opted to run for one of California's U.S. Senate seats. When incumbent Senator Sheridan Downey abruptly withdrew from the race, Manchester Boddy, editor of the Democratic-leaning *Los Angeles Times,* became Douglas's principal opponent. Despite Boddy's attempts to smear Douglas during the Democratic primary by labeling her a communist sympathizer, or a "pink lady," Douglas ultimately prevailed by a 2–1 margin.[19] The negative campaign begun by Boddy—particularly the "pink lady" epithet—resonated in the general election, as Douglas's Republican opponent, Representative Richard M. Nixon, employed a similar strategy. Nixon's ample campaign purse permitted him to wage a massive public relations campaign against Douglas. Nixon accused her of being "pink down to her underwear"; he distributed hundreds of thousands of pink flyers comparing Douglas's liberal voting record with those of other congressional liberals. Douglas defended her voting record and returned Nixon's verbal volleys; in one speech she referred to Nixon as "Tricky Dick," a name that stuck with him for the remainder of his political career.[20] But when Douglas tried to redirect the debate to compare their congressional careers and positions on issues, Nixon's whispering campaign of unsubstantiated

"The first step toward liberation for any group is to use the power in hand. . . . And the power in hand is the vote."

—Helen Gahagan Douglas, *ms. magazine*, october 1973

innuendos kept voter interest focused on allegations against Douglas. Nixon won with 59 percent of the vote, a nearly 700,000-vote plurality.[21]

Douglas retired to private life as a lecturer and a successful author. She later returned to the theater and performed in two Broadway plays. In 1964 she was again in the political spotlight when President Lyndon Johnson appointed her as the Special Ambassador to head the United States delegation to the inauguration ceremonies for President William V.S. Tubman of Liberia. She also authored a book based on her close friendship with Eleanor Roosevelt. She resided in New York City, succumbing to cancer on June 28, 1980.

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Chase Going Woodhouse
1890–1984

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM CONNECTICUT
1945–1947, 1949–1951

Chase Going Woodhouse, an economics professor-turned-politician, served for two nonconsecutive terms, representing a competitive district spanning eastern Connecticut. In recognition of her longtime advocacy for women in the workplace, the Democratic leadership awarded Woodhouse a prominent post on the Banking and Commerce Committee. Linking American domestic prosperity to postwar international economic cooperation, she put forward a powerful argument on behalf of U.S. participation in such organizations as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. "Only the fighting is over," Woodhouse said in November 1945. "We still have got to win the war. And winning the war means working out a system of economic cooperation between nations."[1]

Chase Going was born on March 3, 1890, in Victoria, British Columbia, the only child of American parents Seymour Going, a railroad developer and an Alaska mining pioneer, and Harriet Jackson Going, a teacher. Chase's maternal grandmother particularly influenced her political development, taking her young granddaughter to polling places each election day to protest her inability to vote.[2] In 1908, Chase Going graduated from Science Hill High School in Shelbyville, Kentucky. She studied economics at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and graduated in 1912. A year later she earned her M.A. in economics from McGill. Chase Going pursued advanced studies in political economy at the University of Berlin and, after the outbreak of the First World War, at the University of Chicago. In 1917 she married Yale political scientist Edward James Woodhouse. The couple raised two children, Noel and Margaret, and pursued their academic careers simultaneously, obtaining faculty positions at Smith College and then at the University of North Carolina. At Chapel Hill, Woodhouse founded the Institute of Women's Professional Relations (IWPR) to study the status of working women and trends in employment. For several years, she was employed as an economist for the Bureau of Home Economics at the U.S. Agriculture Department. In 1934, she became a professor of economics at Connecticut College and initiated a series of IWPR conferences in Washington, D.C.[3]

Woodhouse vented her frustration with the ongoing Depression by running for political office. In 1940, the Connecticut Democratic Party convinced an initially reluctant Woodhouse to join the ticket.[4] By a larger margin than any other elected official in the state, she won a two-year term as secretary of state.[5] From 1943 to 1948, Woodhouse presided over the Connecticut Federation of Democratic Women's Clubs. She served on key wartime labor boards in Connecticut, the Minimum Wage Board and the War Labor Board, chairing the latter.[6] From 1942 to 1943, she also chaired the New London Democratic Town Committee.

Woodhouse later recalled that her desire for social change and economic justice for women convinced her to run for a seat in the U.S. Congress in 1944. Though she first was interested in a U.S. Senate seat, the Connecticut Democratic Party instead nominated her as a Representative.[7] At the state convention, Woodhouse defeated William L. Citron, a former Congressman At-Large, by a vote of 127 to 113 among party officials.[8] She earned a reputation as an indefatigable campaigner and talented public speaker, supported by an active network of labor and women's organizations. In the general election Woodhouse faced one-term GOP incumbent John D.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

McWilliams, a Norwich builder and town selectman. She described the central campaign issue as the development of a postwar United Nations and international redevelopment system "that will make permanent peace possible." Woodhouse also advocated tax reform, a plan for full peacetime employment, and more federal money for education and rural electrification programs.[9] In the 1944 elections, voter turnout was high and President Franklin D. Roosevelt carried the state by a slim margin of 52 percent. Woodhouse ran even with the President, edging out McWilliams with a plurality of about 3,000 votes.

Her male House counterparts, Woodhouse recalled years later, made her feel more a colleague than part of a distinct minority. Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas steered Woodhouse onto the Committee on Banking and Currency, an influential assignment for a freshman Member and one he thought would best put her talents to use. Woodhouse's daughter, Margaret, then in her early 20s, worked in the Washington office as executive secretary.[10] Woodhouse also was innovative in that her chief political adviser, John Dempsey, was based in the district rather than in Washington, D.C. He eventually became a powerful Connecticut governor and one of the state's longest serving chief executives.

In her first term, Woodhouse fought for the maintenance of wartime price controls as a protection against inflation for consumers and for more affordable housing for returning veterans. "I have no illusions of what a new Member of Congress can do the first year," she told reporters. "I'm going to evaluate every piece of legislation in terms of how many jobs there will be after the war. Feed them first and reform them later!" The Harry S. Truman administration failed to heed her warnings on the issue and rolled back price controls.

The bulk of Woodhouse's work in the 79th Congress (1945–1947) centered on issues before the Banking and Currency Committee. The committee played a large role in House approval of the $3.75 billion loan to the British government in 1946, the Bretton Woods Conference agreements, and the creation of the World Bank and the IMF. Woodhouse supported the controversial British loan, as she would the Marshall Plan later in her career, by dismissing the opposition as largely "emotional" and "psychological." Woodhouse told colleagues in a floor speech that, "We do not, as yet, always think of ourselves in terms of the responsibilities of the greatest and richest country in the world, the country which alone has the power to determine whether or not the democratic, free enterprise system will expand or decline."[11] She was an ardent supporter of the implementation of the accords for the IMF and the World Bank, arguing that these were indispensable tools for postwar redevelopment. Even while fighting still raged in the Pacific theater, Woodhouse argued for acceptance of Bretton Woods as an important "first step" toward economic integration. "This war is being won not only by military and political cooperation, but also by economic cooperation," Woodhouse said.[12]

Standing for re-election to the 80th Congress (1947–1949) in 1946, Woodhouse and other Democrats faced serious challenges at the polls. Unemployment problems created by rapid demobilization, as well as soaring prices for groceries and other staples, roiled voters. Her opponent in the general election was Horace Seely-Brown, a World War II Navy veteran who married into a family that operated a lucrative apple orchard in eastern Connecticut.[13] Disaffected Democratic voters did not turn against so much as they simply stayed at home in large droves. Seely-Brown captured about 60,000 votes, roughly the same number as McWilliams had in 1944. But Woodhouse polled nearly 15,000 fewer votes than in the prior election, as her opponent won with a comfortable 55 to 45 percent margin. Backlash against Democrats was further aided by the presence of voting machines, which allowed for voting a straight party ticket with the push of a single button. Republicans swept all five Connecticut House seats, turning three Democratic incumbents out of office.

During her hiatus from Congress, Woodhouse served as executive director of the Women's Division of

"We do not, as yet, always think of ourselves in terms of the responsibilities of the greatest and richest country in the world, the country which alone has the power to determine whether or not the democratic free enterprise system will expand or decline."

—Chase Going Woodhouse
House Floor Speech
July 12, 1946

the Democratic National Committee (DNC), and lectured widely on the topic of women in politics.[14] Eager to escape the patronage and politicking required at the DNC, Woodhouse sought a position as a staff expert for the Allied Military Governor of Germany, General Lucius Clay.[15] As Clay's economic adviser, she toured the Allied zones of occupied western Germany and kept closely informed about reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. The DNC post provided Woodhouse public visibility, while the economic advisory role in Germany offered her input into policymaking.[16] That combination made her a formidable comeback candidate in 1948 when she challenged Seely-Brown. She benefited from a larger voter turnout for the presidential election, in which she ran ahead of incumbent President Truman. Woodhouse collected nearly 70,000 votes, outpolling Seely-Brown 52 to 48 percent. Statewide, Democrats regained a majority of Connecticut's House seats.[17]

During her second term in the House, Woodhouse regained her seat on the Banking and Currency Committee and received an additional assignment on the House Administration Committee. She remained a confirmed supporter of Truman administration foreign policies. In 1949, she endorsed the ratification of the North Atlantic Pact that created America's first permanent overseas military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). "The Marshall Plan has proven its value as an effective tool of economic recovery in Europe and as a bulwark against the threatened onrush of communism," Woodhouse told reporters, adding that the Atlantic Pact was the "next logical step."[18] Based on her extensive travels in Germany, she declared that the 1948 Berlin Airlift—which supplied blockaded Soviet-occupied East Berlin with food and supplies—was "worth every cent of the cost," because it proved to Moscow that the Western Allies "mean business" in protecting open access to the German capital.[19]

In 1950, Woodhouse again faced Horace Seely-Brown in her fourth congressional campaign. Much of the midterm election focused on the Truman administration's foreign policy, particularly the decision to intervene with military force on the Korean peninsula to halt North Korea's invasion of South Korea. Following a trend in which the GOP regained control of Connecticut, Woodhouse lost by fewer than 2,300 votes out of 135,000 cast.[20]

After Congress, Woodhouse served as head of congressional relations for the Office of Price Stabilization, where she worked from 1951 until 1953. She was an early and harsh critic of McCarthyite anti-communism, especially when used for political gain.[21] From 1953 until she retired in 1980 at age 90, Woodhouse served as head of the Connecticut Service Bureau for Women's Organizations in Hartford. Woodhouse also was the first chair of the Connecticut Committee on the Status of Women and was a delegate to the Connecticut constitutional convention in 1965. She retired to a circa-1726 home on a 390-acre farm near Baltic, Connecticut. On December 12, 1984, Chase Woodhouse died in New Canaan, Connecticut.

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University of Connecticut Libraries (Storrs, CT), Archives and Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center. *Papers:* 1922–1984, 50 linear feet. Papers reflecting Chase Going Woodhouse's activities and interests in women and family issues, service to the state of

Connecticut and her local community, and other career activities (excluding her duties as secretary of state and U.S. Representative). Includes published and unpublished writings; office files, scrapbooks, and annual reports of Auerbach Service Bureau, a women's service organization, Hartford, Conn.; reference files and reports of U.S. Work Projects Administration, Trends in Occupations Project; reference files, newsletters, and reports on the status of women and the women's movement; records of the Connecticut constitutional convention (1965) to which she was a delegate; Juvenile Justice Standards Project records and publications; and citations, commissions, awards, and photos. Donated by Mrs. Woodhouse, 1983. A finding aid is available in the National Inventory of Documentary Sources in the United States, microfiche 3.78. *Papers:* In the Political Women in Connecticut Collection, ca. 1934–1981, five linear feet. Includes photocopies of transcripts of oral history tapes held by University of Connecticut, Center for Oral History, Storrs, Conn. Interviewees include Chase Going Woodhouse. A finding aid is available in the National Inventory of Documentary Sources in the United States, microfiche 3.78.35.

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Helen Douglas Mankin
1896–1956

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM GEORGIA
1946–1947

During her brief U.S. House term, Helen Douglas Mankin of Georgia brought national attention to her longtime political cause: advocating on behalf of poor and disenfranchised southern voters. "I earnestly believe that the election of a woman from this State to the House of Representatives will mean to the rest of the country another note of progress out of the South," Mankin declared after her victory in a February 1946 special election in which she benefited from the support of African-American voters. Mankin's bid for re-election later that summer, however, revealed the limits of voting reform in the South: the political machine of segregationist Governor Eugene Talmadge blocked her renomination to a full term.

Helen Douglas was born on September 11, 1896, in Atlanta, Georgia, the daughter of Hamilton Douglas and Corrine Williams Douglas. Her parents were teachers who had studied law together at the University of Michigan. Corrine became involved in education when the family moved to Georgia, where state laws prevented women from joining the bar. Hamilton eventually founded the Atlanta Law School. Their home was an intellectual parlor for the likes of reformer Jane Addams and former President and Supreme Court Justice William Howard Taft. Helen Douglas attended Rockford College in Illinois, following in the footsteps of her mother and maternal grandmother. She graduated in 1917 with an A.B. degree but interrupted her law studies to join the American Women's Hospital Unit No. 1 in France, where she served as an ambulance driver for more than a year. When Douglas returned to the United States, she resumed her academic career, graduating from Atlanta Law School in 1920. A year later, the state of Georgia admitted her to the bar along with her 61-year-old mother when the state legislature lifted the bar's ban on women. For two years, she and her sister toured North America by car before she opened a law office in 1924, specializing in aid to poor and black clients while supplementing her income as a lecturer at the Atlanta Law School.

Her first political experience came as the women's manager of I.N. Ragsdale's campaign for mayor of Atlanta in 1927. That year Helen Douglas married Guy M. Mankin, a widower with a seven-year-old son, Guy, Jr. After traveling to several overseas locations following Guy Mankin's job assignments, the family settled in Atlanta, where Helen Mankin resumed her legal career in 1933.[1] In 1935, as chair of the Georgia Child Labor Committee, she unsuccessfully urged the state legislature to ratify a proposed child labor constitutional amendment. The next year she won a seat in the legislature, serving for a decade as a critic of Governor Eugene Talmadge's administration and as a supporter of constitutional, educational, electoral, labor, and prison reforms. In the process, she became an ally of liberal Governor Ellis Arnall, who had succeeded Talmadge in 1942. In 1945, Mankin and Arnall successfully steered a measure through the Georgia house of representatives to repeal the poll tax, a method southern states frequently employed to disenfranchise African-American voters too poor to pay a requisite tax in order to vote.[2]

When Georgia Representative Robert Ramspeck resigned from the U.S. House at the end of 1945, Mankin entered the race to succeed him in a February 1946 special election. The only woman in the crowded contest for the three-county district, which included both Atlanta and Decatur, Mankin used a series of radio addresses to talk about the central issue of her campaign: the equalization

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of freight rates, which varied greatly from section to section of the country and which she believed inhibited southern industry and agriculture. She also used these opportunities to criticize her leading opponent, Thomas Camp, the handpicked successor of Ramspeck, warning voters that Camp was a "railroad employee" and therefore a part of the conspiracy to keep the people of Georgia trapped in poverty. Pledging to support price controls, federal housing programs, and federal aid to education, Mankin won the backing of Governor Arnall, women's groups, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). [3] Her determination to pursue voting reforms, seen in her support for a constitutional amendment to abolish the poll tax, earned her the solid backing of African Americans.[4] This bloc of voters was barred from primaries, but not from special elections, and black voters helped Mankin prevail on February 12, 1946. Trailing Camp until the reporting of the final precinct tallies from the predominantly black Ashby Street, Mankin ended up winning the election by nearly 800 votes. Of the 1,039 registered voters in the African-American neighborhood, 963 cast their vote for Mankin.[5] The African-American *Atlanta Daily World* newspaper noted that the election marked the first time in Atlanta history that blacks served as precinct managers and clerks in a congressional contest.

Mankin's election sent shock waves through segregationist Georgia. Her coalition of minority voters and white liberals caused great unease in the state. When Eugene Talmadge came out of political retirement that fall to run for re-election as governor of Georgia, he inveighed against "the spectacle of Atlanta Negroes sending a Congresswoman to Washington."[6] During his campaign, he mocked Mankin, nicknaming her the "Belle of Ashby Street." Rather than retaliating, the Congresswoman adopted the title as a point of pride, as if she had invented the name herself.[7]

During her short term on the Hill, Mankin championed reform in Georgia politics and looked to give African Americans a greater voice in their government. She served on four committees—Civil Service, Claims, Elections, and Revision of Laws—but was not appointed to her first choice, the House Education Committee. Mankin exhibited loyalty to the Democratic Party, voting with the party 92 percent of the time—an uncharacteristic trait for the typically conservative South of the period. As a Representative, she supported price controls, a federal housing program, and the Hobbs Bill directed against the CIO's Teamsters' Union. Mankin voted against the Case Anti-Labor Bill, opposed funding for the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and favored an end to the poll tax. "I am a liberal but not a radical," Mankin said, when opposing plans for national health insurance.[8] She also backed an internationalist foreign policy in which the United States played a greater role in maintaining world stability after World War II.[9]

In the Georgia Democratic primary of July 1946, which the Supreme Court opened to African Americans for the first time, Mankin outpolled her opponent, James C. Davis, by more than 11,000 votes.[10] But to offset the African-American vote, state officials, unhappy with Mankin's liberal voting record, revived Georgia's county unit system, which had been out of use in the district since 1932. Designed to favor rural precincts and to mitigate the urban vote by awarding the winner of the popular vote in each county a designated amount of unit votes, it was employed—as a former Georgia Representative observed—"to beat Mrs. Mankin, nothing else."[11] The strategy also gave Talmadge, a leading spokesman of white supremacy in the South, a large lead over Governor Ellis Arnall's endorsed candidate, James Carmichael, in the gubernatorial primary—despite the fact that more than 100,000 African Americans went to the polls.[12] Mankin received six unit votes for carrying Fulton County (encompassing much of Atlanta's suburbs), while Davis received eight for carrying two less-populous counties.

Citing her popular mandate, Mankin declared her intention to run as an independent in the general election. She refused to allow "anybody [to] frisk me out of my victory."[13] A special three-judge tribunal in the U.S. District Court in Atlanta upheld the unit system and rejected the Congresswoman's petition to annul the primary results.[14]

Mankin appealed the decision while Governor Arnall and Georgia Democratic Executive Committee members loyal to him made the unprecedented move of putting Mankin's name on the ballot as a Democrat alongside Davis's. But Mankin suffered from a series of setbacks in October 1946. First, after Talmadge won official confirmation as the Democratic gubernatorial nominee at the October 9 party convention, he wrested control of the executive committee from Arnall and promptly acted to remove Mankin's name from the ballot, an effort that succeeded just fours days before the election.[15] The Georgia state democratic convention approved a plan to create an all-white primary to exclude blacks from future nomination processes.[16] On October 29, in a 6–3 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Georgia unit rule, dimming Mankin's prospects.[17] She remained in the race as a write-in candidate, despite threats from white supremacy groups and reports of voting fraud. She won 38 percent of the vote but lost by a margin of almost 12,000 votes to Davis. When she challenged the election results before the House Administration Committee's Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections, the subcommittee rejected her charges.[18] Bitterly disappointed when she realized she had no further legal recourse to contest the election, Mankin angrily commented, "I was written in and counted out, they stole my seat in Congress."[19]

Mankin mounted one more challenge to Davis in the 1948 election. But by that time, as a proponent of civil rights reforms, she had become a magnet for southern segregationist anger. She lost by a wide margin in the Democratic primary. Mankin returned to her law practice and waged a fight against the county unit system. When she initiated a federal suit (*South v. Peters*), the U.S. District Court in Atlanta ruled against her, and the decision was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, which would not rule the practice unconstitutional until 1962. She nonetheless remained active politically, volunteering on the presidential campaign of Adlai Stevenson in 1952. On July 25, 1956, Mankin died in College Park, Georgia, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

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Emory University (Atlanta, GA), Special Collections Department, Robert W. Woodruff Library. *Papers:* In the James C. Davis Papers, 1937–1966, 217 feet. The campaign series (approximately 10 feet, ca. 1946–1962) includes materials (correspondence, clippings, printed matter, sound recordings) on the race between James C. Davis and Helen Mankin.

Georgia State University Library (Atlanta, GA), Special Collections & Archives. *Papers:* In the Georgia Government Documentation Project, 1946–1948, amount unknown. The project includes a series of interviews conducted by Lorraine Nelson in preparation of her book on Helen Douglas Mankin, *The Belle of Ashby Street*. A finding aid is available in the repository and online.

State officials, unhappy with Mankin's liberal voting record, revived Georgia's county unit system, which had been out of use in the district since 1932. Designed to favor rural precincts and to mitigate the urban vote . . . it was employed—as a former Georgia Representative observed—"to beat Mrs. Mankin, nothing else."

NOTES

1 The family moved frequently during their early years together, as Guy Mankin worked as an electrical system designer in Cuba, Brazil, and Argentina.

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17 Lewis H. Hood, "High Court Backs Georgia Unit Rule," 2 October 1946, *New York Times*: 19.

18 See also, Mankin's letter to the editors of the *Washington Post*: "Rep. Mankin's Contest," 20 January 1947, *Washington Post*: 6.

19 Spritzer, *The Belle of Ashby Street*: 130. Years later, Mankin's chief rival in the 1946 special election, Thomas Camp, confirmed that account: "The people who controlled the situation just didn't want any more of her and out she went." Quoted in Spritzer, *The Belle of Ashby Street*: 73.

Eliza Jane Pratt
1902–1981

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NORTH CAROLINA
1946–1947

A longtime House legislative aide for a string of Congressmen from a south-central North Carolina district, Eliza Pratt developed a rapport with voters and knowledge of legislative interests in the district that eventually exceeded that of most other local politicians. When her boss, Congressman William O. Burgin, died in April 1946, Pratt seemed a natural choice to succeed him. Her election a month later, by a far wider margin than any of her predecessor's victories, made Pratt the first woman to represent her home state in Congress.

She was born Eliza Jane Pratt in Morven, North Carolina, on March 5, 1902, one of seven children of James Pratt and Lena Little Pratt. James Pratt was a merchant and farmer who instilled in Eliza a passion for gardening. She enrolled at Queens College in Charlotte, North Carolina, planning to study music, but she left school to seek employment after her father's health failed. She later attended Kings Business College in Charlotte and Temple Secretarial School in Washington, D.C.[1] Pratt never married and raised no children. She became editor of the *Montgomerian* (Troy, North Carolina) newspaper in 1923. In 1924 she resigned her position to accept an offer to serve in Washington, D.C., as an administrative assistant to North Carolina Congressman William C. Hammer, who represented a large swath in the southwestern part of the state. When Hammer died in 1930, Pratt went on to work for a succession of North Carolina Representatives from the same district: Hinton James, J. Walter Lambeth, and William O. Burgin. During the 1930s and 1940s, Pratt was active in various clubs and social programs for North Carolinians who worked on Capitol Hill.

Following Congressman Burgin's death, North Carolina Democratic Party leaders began the search for a successor. Unlike most other southern states during that era, North Carolina was not a one-party state. While the congressional delegation remained solidly Democratic, an active Republican Party had its stronghold in the western piedmont of the state. It had been key when the state voted for the GOP presidential candidate, Herbert Hoover, in 1928.[2] Preparing for the 1946 elections, Republicans hoped to capitalize on voter discontent with the Harry S. Truman administration's postwar economic policies.

Eliza Jane Pratt had built-in advantages in the scramble for the Democratic nomination, primarily her strong base in the district. Pratt's hometown, Lexington, was located in a narrow band in the oddly shaped district stretching south to northwest between Charlotte and Greensboro. After working 22 years for four successive Congressmen, she knew the needs of the constituency better than any of her challengers and voters knew her. In a special meeting held in Troy to nominate a candidate, Pratt's supporters pushed her name against six other candidates. Though Pratt was ill with the flu and unable to make her own case, the North Carolina Democratic Party executive committee debated only 30 minutes before nominating her for the remainder of Congressman Burgin's term in the 79th Congress (1945–1947).[3] Following a five-week campaign in which she paid all her own expenses, Pratt won a lopsided victory over Republican candidate, lumberman H. Frank Hulin of Lexington, on May 25, 1946, to fill the remainder of Burgin's term. Pratt tallied 31,058 votes to Hulin's 8,017—for an 80 percent margin of victory, a percentage well above that of Burgin in any of his four election campaigns.[4]

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It was an impressive but temporary triumph. A nearby newspaper, the *Greensboro Record*, seemed to sum up expectations when, in explaining her special election, the editors remarked that in the fall elections "the man to fill the post for the regular congressional term will be chosen."[5] *Charlotte Observer* Washington correspondent Red Buck Bryant, who understood Pratt's special qualifications, saw things somewhat differently. "With her background and training," Bryant wrote, "Miss Pratt would make a worthy Congressman for years instead of a few months." While Pratt had the experience, she later observed that she had little money to mount political campaigns.[6] Moreover, the party had settled on its preferred candidate for the full term in the 80th Congress (1947–1949). On the day Pratt won the special election, Charles B. Deane of Rockingham secured the Democratic nomination by a slender margin against another male candidate. Pratt was not a candidate in that race. In the fall elections, Deane (compiler of the *Congressional Directory*) survived a strong effort by GOP candidate Joseph H. Wicker, Sr., winning by a margin of 54 to 46 percent.[7]

Pratt became the first woman to represent North Carolina when she took the oath of office on June 3, 1946, escorted by Members of the state delegation into the House Chamber. Three of her sisters looked on as House Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas administered the oath.[8] Congresswoman Pratt was appointed to three committees: Pensions, Territories, and Flood Control. Her work as a longtime congressional aide gave her an intimate knowledge of pending legislation and taught her to manage her office and efficiently handle constituent requests. During the brief eight weeks that the House was in session during her term (Congress recessed on August 2), Pratt made no floor speeches and introduced no bills.

Pratt retired from Congress on January 3, 1947, but remained close to the capital scene for more than a decade after leaving Congress. She worked in Washington for several federal agencies. From 1947 to 1951, she was employed in the Office of Alien Property. She later served in the Agriculture Department, from 1951 to 1954, and the Library of Congress, from 1954 to 1956. She returned to Capitol Hill as a secretary to Representative Alvin P. Kitchin, serving her former district, from 1957 to 1962. Afterward, she resettled in North Carolina and worked as a public relations executive for the North Carolina Telephone Company. Reflecting on the role of women in North Carolina politics, Pratt later found reason for hope. "The men here were slow to accept suffrage, and the majority have not yet fully recognized women as equal political partners," she said. "But, looking back, I can remember the time when only a handful of women would turn out for a rally. Now they sometimes outnumber the men. And they work as regular members of a campaign organization. Unfortunately, when a campaign ends, they are all too often relegated to their former roles as second-class politicians."[9] She resided in Wadesboro, North Carolina, until her death in Charlotte on May 13, 1981.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Eliza Jane Pratt," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

East Carolina University (Greenville, NC), J.Y. Joyner Library, http://www.lib.ecu.edu. *Papers:* 1946, two scrapbooks. One scrapbook mainly including congratulatory messages to Eliza Pratt on the nomination and election to fill out the term of Representative William Burgin. The other scrapbook contains mostly clippings on her activities during her six months in office. The scrapbooks are also available on microfilm. A finding aid is available in the repository.

NOTES

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Georgia Lee Lusk
1893–1971

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW MEXICO
1947–1949

Georgia Lee Lusk was the first woman elected to the United States Congress from New Mexico. Representative Lusk entered the 80th Congress (1947–1949) determined to improve the education system, but as the mother of three World War II servicemen, one of whom was killed in action, she also fought for increased benefits for returning war veterans and supported the foreign policy of the Harry S. Truman administration.

On May 12, 1893, Georgia Lee Witt was born to George and Mary Isabel Witt in Carlsbad, New Mexico. In 1914, Georgia graduated from New Mexico State Teacher's College after also attending New Mexico Highlands University and Colorado State Teacher's College. She worked as a teacher for a year before marrying Dolph Lusk, a cattleman, in 1915. Dolph Lusk died in 1919, leaving Georgia with three young sons. While also running the family ranch, the young widow resumed her teaching career to support her family. In 1924, Lusk became school superintendent of Lea County, New Mexico. After an unsuccessful bid in 1928, she was elected state superintendent of public instruction in 1930, serving until 1935. A year later, she took on the superintendent position for rural Guadalupe County, before serving as New Mexico state superintendent again from 1944 until 1947. During her long tenure in school administration, Lusk often witnessed discouraging circumstances in New Mexico classrooms, such as severe book shortages and schoolroom overcrowding. A shrewd administrator, she found state funding, even during the Depression, to improve school conditions. Her eight years of leadership as state superintendent moved New Mexico from near the bottom of the nationwide school financing list to the top.[1] After her children were grown, Lusk turned her sights on improving education on the national level. In 1944, she served as a delegate to the White House Conference on Rural Education.

Georgia Lusk's political zeal led her to seek one of two At-Large seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, left open after Congressman Clinton Anderson resigned his seat when appointed Secretary of Agriculture in 1946. In the June primary, she led six other candidates, barely beating popular Lieutenant Governor J.B. Jones by fewer than 300 votes.[2] In the general election, she garnered more statewide votes than the well-seasoned incumbent candidate, Congressman Antonio Fernandez, the other At-Large winner. In an election where the Republicans gained 55 seats and took control of the House of Representatives, Lusk, a staunch Democrat, also bucked a Republican trend when she took her seat in the 80th Congress in January 1947.[3] She was one of seven women elected to that Congress.

Like any typical freshman, Lusk defended the interests of her constituents, weighing in on debates concerning copper mining and national policy on the maintenance of arid land, both economic concerns for New Mexico voters.[4] However, her background as a teacher and superintendent inspired Lusk to use her national office to promote educational measures. She supported the establishment of a Cabinet-level department of education, remarking that, "If it's important for the government to give financial assistance to transportation, why not to education?"[5] In June, 1947, she lent her support to a bill necessitating the foreign broadcast of pro-American messages via "Voice of America" radio programs. Although opponents during the early Cold War Era were concerned

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NEW MEXICO STATE ARCHIVES, GEORGIA LUSK COLLECTION

about the reception of such "propaganda" broadcasts in budding communist regimes, Lusk argued that this plan was a peaceful form of education and outreach to other nations. Lusk also backed federal aid to education, including support for funding hot lunch programs in schools and defending teachers against salary cuts proposed by Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, the Republican presidential candidate in 1948.[6]

Georgia Lusk's support for educational measures was second only to her concern for veterans' benefits and civil defense. Lusk's sons—Virgil, Morgan, and Thomas Eugene—served in World War II; Virgil, a fighter pilot, was killed in action in North Africa.[7] Because of her experience as the mother of veterans, Lusk was appointed to the Veterans' Affairs Committee. She took her role on this committee very seriously, believing that with the recent end of hostilities, the Veterans' Affairs Committee would likely touch more American lives than any other committee in Congress.[8] Lusk introduced several bills increasing the benefits provided by the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, popularly known as the G.I. Bill of Rights. Her legislation specifically called for a larger stipend for students under the bill's jurisdiction, benefits for widows and dependents of servicemen who were killed or wounded in battle, and better housing benefits for returning veterans to accommodate the increased cost of living.[9] Lusk also supported legislation to increase retirement benefits for servicemen and to provide on-the-job training to veterans returning to civilian life. Lusk worked closely with Republican Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers to obtain many of these increased benefits.

Despite cooperating with Rogers on veterans' benefits, Lusk maintained her Democratic loyalties. She was a staunch backer of the Truman administration's foreign policy proposals, voting in favor of financial and military aid for governments in Greece and Turkey and endorsing universal military training (UMT). Lusk saw UMT as an insurance policy on the country's future, disagreeing with critics that training all young men for combat was an act of aggression. She stressed the educational component of UMT, claiming that it would teach discipline and fight provincialism, as it would allow young men to interact with others from different parts of the country.[10] Lusk supported the majority of the Truman administration's domestic programs, most significantly backing the President's unpopular opposition to income tax reduction. She turned away from President Truman, however, when she voted in favor of the Taft–Hartley Act, a piece of anti-labor legislation, which passed over the President's veto.

"If it's important for the government to give financial assistance to transportation, why not to education?"

—Georgia Lusk, 1946

In the June 1948 Democratic primary, Georgia Lusk sought renomination for her At-Large seat but fell short in a three-way election split. Winner and former Governor John E. Miles, also an education reformer, went on to win the general election, serving one term in the 81st Congress (1949–1951).[11] Incumbent colleague, Congressman Antonio Fernandez, won back his seat, to take the other At-Large bid. Lusk's loss was by a narrow margin of only 2,451 votes, and rumors of an illegal move by a political

machine-backed candidate led her to weigh demanding a recount.[12] Lusk declined a recount, however, citing the financial obligation of the process, and later quipped, "I thought they'd only say 'a woman can't take a lickin.'"[13] In September 1949, President Truman appointed her to the War Claims Commission, where she served with other Democratic appointees until their dismissal by President Eisenhower in 1953. Lusk returned to Albuquerque and continued her crusade for education, serving again as the state superintendent of public schools. Lusk retired from public service in 1960. She died on January 15, 1971, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Georgia Lee Lusk," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

New Mexico State Records Center and Archives (Santa Fe, NM), Archives and Historical Services Division. *Papers*: 1931–1958, six linear feet and 10 volumes. The collection includes political and private papers of Georgia L. Lusk that relate to the 80th Congress, the Veterans' Affairs Committee (1947–1955), War Claims Commission (1947–1953), and education in New Mexico (1931–1958). Also included are 10 scrapbooks pertaining to her tenure as Superintendent of Public Instruction for New Mexico.

NOTES

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Katharine St. George
1894–1983

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEW YORK
1947–1965

Born to privilege, Katharine St. George became involved in the family business—politics. During her 18 years in the House, she rose into the GOP leadership because of her fiscal conservatism and commitment to limiting the size of government, two beliefs that distinguished her from her famous cousin, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Though she spurned the feminist label, St. George became an outspoken advocate for women's economic equality, coining the phrase "equal pay for equal work."

Katharine Delano Price Collier was born on July 12, 1894, in Bridgnorth, England, one of four children born to Price Collier, an Iowa-born Unitarian minister and later the European editor of *Forum* magazine, and Katharine Delano, an aunt of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. When she was just a toddler, her family moved to Tuxedo Park, New York, a posh haven for millionaires located northwest of the city. At age 11, Collier returned to Europe, where she was schooled in France, Switzerland, and Germany.[1] In April 1917, Katharine Collier married George St. George who, by 1919, operated a wholesale coal brokerage on Wall Street. The couple had one daughter, Priscilla. Katharine St. George opened and managed a highly successful kennel business that bred setters and pointers.

St. George also was active in civic affairs as a longtime chair of the area's Red Cross chapter, a town board member from 1926 to 1949, and a member of the local education board from 1926 to 1946. St. George, who also had been a member of the Republican county committee in the 1920s, distanced herself from Republican politics during President Franklin Roosevelt's first two terms out of deference to her cousin. She opposed his third term in 1940, however, and that break marked her reentry into politics (in Congress, she would vote for the 22nd Amendment, which limited Presidents to a maximum of two terms in office).[2] In 1942 she lost her bid for the Republican nomination to the state assembly, but that only seemed to provide motivation. St. George recalled that "a politician ought to know how it feels to be licked."[3] That fall she chaired the Orange County campaign committee and worked for the successful re-election of longtime New York Representative Hamilton Fish.

Congressman Fish's political misfortune spurred St. George to run for a seat in the U.S. House. In 1944, the isolationist Congressman lost his seat, representing a vast district in the Hudson River Valley north of New York City, to Augustus W. Bennet, a Republican who had lost to Fish in the primary but then ran successfully on the Democratic and American Labor Party ticket in the general election. On April 1, 1945, St. George decided to face Bennet in the 1946 Republican primary. She campaigned for 14 months, giving speeches and courting the Republican establishment. She campaigned on a labor-oriented platform: promising jobs for returning veterans, meeting farmers' agricultural needs, and preserving labor's gains during the New Deal. The "ultimate goal" seemed to be to make the system so bountiful as to make, in St. George's words, "every union member a capitalist."[4] With the strong support of Fish, St. George defeated Bennet in the primary and, with 60 percent of the vote in the general election, dispatched Democrat James K. Welsh.[5] Though she faced significant primary opposition again in 1948, St. George won another eight terms without being seriously challenged, despite the fact that her district was twice redrawn, in 1952 and 1962.

POCKET CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORY, 84TH CONGRESS

During her 18-year tenure, she served on the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, the Committee on Government Operations, and the influential Committee on Armed Services. St. George later claimed that the Post Office and Civil Service assignment was a key one for her, because it allowed her to bring high-profile projects to her district that would benefit her constituents. She also served as president of the American delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In 1961, as a reward for her seniority and fidelity to the party, the Republican leadership made St. George the first woman to serve on the powerful House Rules Committee, which prioritizes bills that come to the floor and sets the conditions of debate.

Congresswoman St. George had a keen interest in foreign affairs and was more of an internationalist than her predecessor. But she realized that her district, with pockets of wealthy communities surrounded by dairy farming counties, had been isolationist for generations and had little interest in overseas policies. Therefore, as a junior Member she focused on local needs. Only later, after she had seniority, did she attend to national issues. In May 1953, as chair of a Post Office and Civil Service subcommittee, she proposed legislation to grant the Postmaster General, rather than Congress, authority to increase postal rates. In a legislative effort important to local dairy farmers, she authored bills to allow the Defense Department to use surplus butter in military food rations and to limit reductions in dairy price controls. St. George also wrote legislation to establish a federal safety division in the Labor Department, to supply a code of ethics for government service, and to prohibit payment of Veterans' Administration benefits to persons belonging to groups advocating the overthrow of the U.S. government.

Representative St. George's seniority gave her a prominent position in the party hierarchy: She earned seats on the Republican Policy Committee and the Committee on Committees, which determined assignments for Republicans. As her state's representative on the committee, St. George was responsible for committee assignments to Republican Members from New York. Once, when New York Representative John Lindsay requested a post on Foreign Affairs, St. George turned him down. Noting that he had little background for it, she instead placed him on the Judiciary Committee, where eventually he oversaw much of the civil rights legislation of the period. "You know what you'd be if you go on Foreign Affairs?" St. George told Lindsay. "You'd just be a cookie-pusher around Washington cocktail parties. You're a lawyer. Now go on a good committee where you can do something."[6] After his service in the House, Lindsay was elected mayor of New York City. St. George also served as a regional whip, tracking votes for Republican legislation.[7] She reveled in her congressional service, once telling a colleague, "It is the only place on earth where neither wealth nor parentage counts for anything. . . . You may inherit your father's seat . . . but you do not inherit his position in the House of Representatives. You earn it on your own."[8]

Though St. George did not embrace the feminist label, she became a champion of two decidedly reformist causes—equal rights and equal pay for women. Women's rights were the one area in which she dissented from her GOP colleagues. She was unable in 1950 to convince the Judiciary Committee to report out to the full House a proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). She also failed in her attempt to get 218 signatures from House Members on a discharge petition that would have brought the bill to the floor. At the core of her work on this issue was an abiding conviction that if women were to achieve equality and fully participate in American society, they needed a base of economic strength. St. George persevered, and her 1959 proposal to outlaw sex discrimination in the payment of wages became law in the form of the Equal Pay Act of 1963. "What you might mean by 'equal rights' might be totally different to what I believe is 'equal rights,'" St. George said. "I always felt . . . women were discriminated against in employment . . . I think women are quite capable of holding their own if they're given the opportunity. What I wanted them to have was the opportunity."[9] In 1964, she joined ranks with other women lawmakers, led by Democrat Martha Griffiths of Michigan, to demand inclusion of a "sexual discrimination" clause in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. "We are entitled to this little crumb of equality,"

St. George told male colleagues in a floor speech. "The addition of that little, terrifying word 's-e-x' will not hurt this legislation in any way. In fact, it will improve it. It will make it comprehensive. It will make it logical. It will make it right."[10]

St. George's traditional notions about women's place at home became magnified as she witnessed the radicalization of the feminist movement of the 1960s. Her early work on legislation calling for an end to discrimination in the workplace and equality under the law appeared incongruous with her later statements about women's role in society. She once told a reporter, "A good mother at home is twice as effective as one at a meeting." She also discouraged women from running for federal office, noting that in any circumstance politics "should certainly not be undertaken until her children are grown."[11]

In her 1964 election bid for a 10th consecutive term, St. George ran into a problem that plagued many Republicans. GOP presidential candidate Barry Goldwater had a polarizing effect on the electorate with his pro-war, arch-conservative platform. Nevertheless, she campaigned actively for Goldwater in her district, more so than for her own re-election.[12] President Lyndon B. Johnson crushed Goldwater in the general election winning by more than 15 million votes. The New York Republican Party suffered tremendously, losing eight incumbents in the state delegation.[13] St. George was one of those political casualties, losing a narrow race to previously unknown liberal Democrat John G. Dow by about 6,000 votes out of 188,000 cast (52.5 percent to 48.5 percent). "I was under a mistaken idea that my situation was pretty well established," St. George recalled.[14] At age 68 she returned to Tuxedo Park, where she remained active in local politics as chair of the Republican town committee. Katharine St. George died in Tuxedo Park on May 2, 1983.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Katharine Price Collier St. George," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Cornell University Library (Ithaca, NY), Department of Manuscripts and University Archives. *Papers:* 1939–1964, 84 feet. Correspondence, speeches, reports, memoranda, itineraries, press releases, campaign files, newsletters, guestbooks, clippings, scrapbooks, records and tape recordings, films, and photographs, chiefly from the service of Katharine St. George in Congress. Topics covered include appropriations, agriculture, alien property, civil rights, conservation, flood control, foreign affairs and aid, space program, health insurance, public housing, poverty, veterans' benefits, immigration claims, service academy appointments, post offices, ERA, and Republican Party matters. A finding aid is available.

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Vera Cahalan Bushfield
1889–1976

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ REPUBLICAN FROM SOUTH DAKOTA
1948

Vera Bushfield's brief Senate service in the autumn of 1948 never brought her to the Capitol, where the 80th Congress (1947–1949) had recessed for the general elections. Instead, she stayed in her native South Dakota tending to constituent services after being appointed to the final weeks of the term of her late husband, Harlan J. Bushfield.

Vera Sarah Cahalan was born in Miller, South Dakota, on August 9, 1889, the year the state was admitted to the Union. Her parents, Maurice Francis Cahalan and Mary Ellen Conners Cahalan, were farmers who had recently resettled from Iowa. They raised three daughters and a son. Vera Cahalan grew up in Miller, attended the public schools, and, in 1912, graduated with a degree in domestic science from Stout Institute in Menominee, Wisconsin. She later attended Dakota Wesleyan University and the University of Minnesota. On April 15, 1912, Vera Cahalan married Harlan J. Bushfield, a lawyer born and raised in Miller. The Bushfields had three children: Mary, John, and Harlan, Jr.

Harlan Bushfield became involved in state politics and eventually chaired the South Dakota GOP, guiding it into Alf Landon's win column during the 1936 presidential election. He later served as governor of South Dakota from 1939 to 1943. Elected to the U.S. Senate in November 1942, Bushfield served on the Rules and Finance committees, as well as the District of Columbia, the Agriculture and Forestry, and the Indian Affairs committees. Bushfield earned a reputation as a leading isolationist and an outspoken opponent of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs.[1]

During her husband's political career, Vera Bushfield became a noted speaker throughout South Dakota, specialized in women's and children's issues, and was her husband's most trusted adviser. She was a member of the Hand County (SD) child welfare commission. The Bushfields' political ideologies were closely aligned.[2] While governor, Harlan Bushfield reformed the state tax laws and sought to keep government small. A strong believer in small and decentralized government, Governor Bushfield cut the state budget by a quarter and put South Dakota on a pay-as-you-go basis.[3] The couple gained national recognition when Harlan Bushfield was nominated as a GOP presidential candidate during the 1940 Republican National Convention. Wendell Willkie eventually won the nomination.

In early 1948, Harlan Bushfield announced that due to ill health, he would not seek re-election.[4] On September 27, 1948, with Congress out of session, he passed away. The Republican Governor of South Dakota, George T. Mickleson, appointed Vera Bushfield to fill her husband's unexpired term on October 6 to "permit the late Harlan J. Bushfield's office to function normally and without interruption." Mickleson added that the appointment was made "with the understanding that shortly before the 80th Congress reconvenes [Vera Bushfield] will resign."[5] Earlier in the year Karl E. Mundt, a five-term U.S. Representative, won the Republican nomination for the full term, beginning in the 81st Congress (1949–1951).[6]

Vera Bushfield's qualifications as a political adviser to a prominent politician put her in good stead to tend to the needs of the people of her state. With the Senate in temporary recess, she chose to remain in South Dakota with a small staff in Pierre rather than relocate to Washington, D.C., for what she knew would be an abbreviated term. She noted that "I can serve the constituency best by making

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"On many occasions a woman is more conscious of the pulse of the people than a man. She has a better understanding of what life in the home is like. She is closer to the youth. With intelligence and effort, she can easily learn the fundamentals of government, especially nowadays when education is available to anyone who has the ambition to pursue it."

—Vera Bushfield, 1971

myself as accessible as possible," but reportedly admitted that she had more interest in her grandchildren than in "political oratory."[7] Senator Bushfield received no committee assignments and made no floor speeches. She was not even sworn in to office in a traditional Senate Chamber ceremony.

When the Senate reconvened late in the year, Vera Bushfield tendered her resignation, effective December 26, 1948, to give a seniority edge to Senator-elect Mundt. She retired to her family and grandchildren and never sought elective office again. Asked years later about the role of women in politics, she observed that women in public service had inherent advantages over men. "On many occasions a woman is more conscious of the pulse of the people than a man," Bushfield explained in 1971. "She has a better understanding of what life in the home is like. She is closer to the youth. With intelligence and effort, she can easily learn the fundamentals of government, especially nowadays when education is available to anyone who has the ambition to pursue it. More than ever the political odds are in a woman's favor."[8] Vera Bushfield died in Fort Collins, Colorado, on April 16, 1976.

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Reva Beck Bosone
1895–1983

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM UTAH
1949–1953

A former Salt Lake City municipal judge and Utah legislator (the state's first woman to serve in both capacities), Congresswoman Reva Beck Bosone blended a jurist's authority and impartiality with a reformer's commitment to improving people's lives. "Do right and fear not," Judge Bosone once advised a group of college graduates.[1] As a two-term Representative who specialized in land reclamation, water projects, and the reform of the Indian Affairs Bureau, she legislated according to that motto.

The granddaughter of Danish immigrants and Mormon pioneers, Reva Beck was born in American Fork, Utah, on April 2, 1895, to Christian M. Beck and Zilpha Ann Chipman Beck, hotel proprietors. Raised in a comfortable household that encouraged learning, Reva Beck attended public schools and eventually graduated from Westminster Junior College in 1917.[2] Two years later she received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California at Berkeley. Reva Beck married the son of a prominent Utah politician, but the union soon failed.[3] From 1920 until 1927, Beck taught high school English, speech, and drama in several Utah schools. When she enrolled at the University of Utah, College of Law, in Salt Lake City, she met Joseph P. Bosone. For a brief stint, she taught English at the university. Reva Beck married Joseph Bosone in 1929 and, a year later, shortly before the birth of their only child, a daughter named Zilpha, Reva Beck Bosone graduated with her L.L.B. The Bosones relocated to Helper, a coal-mining community in central Utah, where they opened a law practice together.[4]

Bosone remembered that the origins of her interest in political office derived from her mother's admonition: "If you want to do good, you go where the laws are made because a country is no better than its laws."[5] In 1932, she became the first woman to serve in the state legislature when she was elected as a Democrat to the Utah house of representatives from a rural district.[6] She won re-election in 1934, this time from Salt Lake City, where she and her husband had moved their law practice. Bosone rose quickly to the majority party floor leader's post and chair of the sifting committee, which controlled the flow of bills to the floor. She secured passage of a women's and children's wage and hour law, a child labor amendment to the Utah constitution, and an unemployment insurance law. In 1936, she left the legislature and won election as the first woman to hold a Salt Lake City judgeship. Initially, she held a post in the traffic court and earned a reputation as a scrupulous jurist, leveling fines sometimes twice those of other judges and instituting a thriving traffic school and programs to treat alcohol abuse. "Repeaters," Bosone told the Associated Press, "go to jail."[7] After a year, she took over the Salt Lake City police court. The city's traffic accident rates plummeted, and Bosone became a public favorite and a darling of the press for her tough approach. She won re-election in 1940 and 1944 and served in that capacity until her election to Congress. A talented public speaker, she also hosted a local radio program, "Her Honor—the Judge."[8] In 1945, Bosone was an official observer at the United Nations' founding conference at San Francisco. She also served as the first director of the Utah state board for education on alcoholism.

In 1948 Bosone challenged one-term incumbent Republican William A. Dawson for the U.S. congressional seat encompassing Salt Lake City and a sliver of the state that ran northwest of the city to the Nevada border. She recalled phoning the *Salt Lake Tribune* on impulse from

her chambers: "I'm going to have my announcement in the paper tomorrow. I'm going to run for the U.S. Congress."[9] The campaign cost $1,250 and drew heavily on volunteers, Utah women's organizations, and several women state legislators. Dawson had been a member of the Utah senate from 1940 to 1944. In 1946, he ran a successful campaign for Congress as nationwide the GOP gained 56 seats in the House and took a solid majority. Bosone ran as a "Fair Deal" Democrat, campaigning with President Harry S. Truman during his whistle stop train tour through Utah and broadly supporting his domestic and foreign policies, especially U.S. involvement in the United Nations.[10] She also took a keen interest in soil conservation and reclamation, important issues for her Utah constituency. Enjoying wide name recognition, Bosone ran ahead of Truman on the ticket, winning 57 percent of the vote and becoming the first woman to represent her state in Congress. Nationally, Democrats regained their House majority.

When Bosone took her seat in the House for the 81st Congress (1949–1951) in January 1949, she was offered a spot on the Judiciary Committee, a plum assignment for a freshman with her background and a panel on which no woman had served. But she turned it down and persuaded reluctant Democratic leaders to put her onto the Public Lands Committee (later named Interior and Insular Affairs), a seat more important to her western district.[11] In the 82nd Congress (1951–1953), Bosone also served on the House Administration Committee.

The bulk of Congresswoman Bosone's legislative initiatives came from her Interior and Insular Affairs assignments on the Public Lands and Indian Affairs subcommittees. In April 1950, she introduced a bill "to start the wheels turning to take American Indians off Government wardship."[12] Though unacquainted with the issue prior to coming to Congress, she was inspired by Native Americans' testimony before the committee and several visits to reservations. The measure authorized the Secretary of the Interior to commission a study to determine which Native-American tribes should be removed from under the supervision of the Indian Bureau and granted control and management of their affairs. Critics warned it would repeal vital federal protections for Native Americans enacted in the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, but the measure still passed the House.[13] It failed, however, to gain Senate approval.

From her Interior seat, Bosone hoped to promote land management, reclamation, and water control efforts through proposals such as her Small Water Projects Bill, which would have established a revolving fund to pay for modest reclamation projects.[14] She also helped pass the Weber Basin Project, which provided water to northern Utah. In a move unpopular with conservation groups, Bosone tried to include the proposed Echo Park Dam as part of the Colorado River Project, though the plan eventually was rejected because Dinosaur National Monument, in the upper reaches of Grand Canyon National Park, would have been submerged.[15] During Bosone's congressional career, she also aided the unsuccessful effort to build Hell's Canyon Dam on Idaho's Snake River. In addition, Bosone took an interest in overseas territories, supporting Hawaiian and Alaskan statehood and voting for a Puerto Rican constitution in 1952 which contained a controversial provision that opponents labeled as socialistic.[16]

Congresswoman Bosone supported a range of legislation that did not always accord with her conservative-leaning Salt Lake constituency. She favored extension of Social Security and funding for public housing for military personnel, as well as the creation of a national healthcare system.[17] Bosone voted against the Subversive Activities Control and Communist Registration Act, believing the government had overstepped its bounds. In 1949, she opposed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Act on the grounds that it invested too much power in an agency that operated under minimal congressional oversight.[18] While fellow Members feared they would be tarred as communist sympathizers if they opposed the measure, Bosone was one of only four 'No' votes for the bill. She declared, "I vote my conscience."[19] In December 1950, weeks after the Chinese intervention in the Korean War, she argued that mandatory price and wage controls be put

into place to check the rising cost of groceries and to stem inflation.[20] Bosone once observed of the role of a Representative, "the job should be done, whether the required course of action is popular or not. The biggest need in politics and government today is for people of integrity and courage, who will do what they believe is right and not worry about the political consequences to themselves."[21]

Shifting electoral sands and Bosone's only significant stumble during two decades of public office conspired to bring her House career to a sudden close. In 1950, she had won a second term by defeating Republican National Committeewoman and future U.S. Treasurer Ivy Baker Priest, with 53 percent of the vote. In May 1952, as Bosone geared up to campaign for a third term in a "grudge fight" rematch with GOP candidate William Dawson, reports emerged that she had illegally accepted $630 in campaign contributions from two staffers.[22] Bosone and her aides claimed the contributions were voluntary, that Bosone had been unaware of the law, and that the money was unspent. The Justice Department eventually cleared Bosone of wrongdoing, but press coverage proved damaging. Dawson pounced on the allegations of campaign malfeasance and also implied that Bosone was sympathetic to communism because of her support for social welfare programs and her opposition to the CIA Bill.[23] He also benefited from GOP presidential candidate Dwight Eisenhower's long coattails. Bosone ran better than Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson but lost 53 to 47 percent. The entire Utah delegation went Republican, and the House swung back to GOP control.

After leaving Congress, Bosone resumed law practice in Salt Lake City. She hosted a four-day-a-week award-winning television show, "It's a Woman's World," which highlighted topics of interest to women. In 1954, she again ran for Congress in her old district, winning the Democratic primary by a more than 2-to-1 margin. She lost, however, in the general election to Dawson, 57 percent to 43 percent of the vote, despite the fact that Democrats ran well nationally and wrested control of both chambers of Congress back from the GOP. From 1957 to 1960, Bosone served as legal counsel to the Safety and Compensation Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor. In 1961, President Kennedy named Bosone the U.S. Post Office Department's judicial officer and chair of its contract board of appeals.[24] She held these posts until her retirement in January 1968. Late in life, Bosone lived with her daughter in Vienna, Virginia, until her death on July 21, 1983.

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Bosone once observed of the role of a Representative, "The job should be done, whether the required course of action is popular or not. The biggest need in politics and government today is for people of integrity and courage, who will do what they believe is right and not worry about the political consequences to themselves."

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Cecil Murray Harden
1894–1984

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM INDIANA
1949–1959

Cecil M. Harden rose through the ranks of the Republican Party in her state and nationally before winning her first campaign for elective office to the House of Representatives. Harden eventually served five terms, making her one of the longest-serving women at the time of her retirement in 1959. "There is no game more fascinating, no game more important, than the great game of politics as we play it here in America," Harden said early in her public career. "The more interest you take in politics, the more you meet your responsibilities as a citizen."[1]

Cecil Murray was born November 21, 1894, in Covington, Indiana, daughter of Timothy J. Murray, a real estate broker and longtime local Democratic leader, and Jennie Clotfelter Murray. She attended public schools in Covington and entered Indiana University. Later that year she left to teach school in Troy Township, Indiana, and in the public schools in Covington. On December 22, 1914, she married Frost Revere Harden, who eventually became a Covington automobile dealer. They had one son, Murray.

Cecil Harden took an active interest in politics after President Herbert Hoover appointed her husband postmaster of Covington. A year later, when the new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, appointed a Democrat to the position, she became involved in the local Republican committee, which often held its meetings in the hall above her husband's automobile showroom.[2] In 1932, Harden was elected the Republican precinct vice chairman, a position she held until 1940. In 1938, she won the vice chairmanship of the Fountain County GOP (which she held until 1950) and was made vice chair of an Indiana congressional district. She became a member of the Republican National Speakers Bureau in 1940. From 1944 to 1959, Harden served as a Republican National Committeewoman from Indiana. She was an At-Large delegate to the Republican National Conventions in 1948, 1952, 1956, and 1968. In 1949, GOP National Chairman Hugh Scott named Harden to a special steering group to map Republican strategy in between regular meetings of the whole committee.[3] "I believe that the American people are basically opposed to the trend our domestic affairs has been taking," Harden said, reflecting on 16 years of Democratic Party rule in the White House. "I am confident that once the Republican Party advances a concrete program for a revision of this trend toward socialism, the American people will rally behind us in overwhelming numbers."[4]

When western Indiana GOP Representative Noble J. Johnson resigned in July 1948 to accept a federal judgeship, Harden won the Republican nomination for the general election that fall. The vacant seat—which stretched west of Indianapolis and south to include Terre Haute—had been held by Johnson since he defeated three-term Democrat Virginia Jenckes in 1938. Harden's Democratic opponent, Jack J. O'Grady, had been campaigning a full three months before she ever entered the race. Despite years of work behind the scenes in the Republican Party, Harden was little-known by the public. She decided to canvass the district in her station wagon on a seven-day-a-week speaking tour and to buy space on roadside billboards.[5] Harden stuck to generalities and laid out few specific initiatives in her platform. She spoke about the dangers of communism and the importance of balancing the federal budget.[6] In what proved to be an unusually close race, Harden prevailed with a margin of just 483 votes out of more than 132,000 cast, with O'Grady taking

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his hometown of Terre Haute but Harden winning the surrounding rural counties. A third-party Prohibition candidate captured about twice Harden's plurality. In the ensuing four elections, Harden won slightly more comfortable margins of victory ranging from 52 to 56 percent.[7]

When Harden was sworn in as a freshman Representative in January 1949, she was appointed to the Veterans' Affairs Committee. She transferred to the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments (later Government Operations) in the following term and served on the Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service in the 83rd through the 85th Congresses (1953–1959). In the 83rd Congress, while the GOP briefly held the majority, Harden chaired the Inter-Governmental Relations subcommittee of Government Operations. Her responsibilities on the Republican National Committee also required a great deal of travel. In Washington, she took up residence in the Congressional Hotel (later named the O'Neill House Office Building), while her husband, Frost, remained in Covington. Though supportive of his wife's work, he kept his distance from it. "I have nothing whatever to do with my wife's congressional office," Frost Harden once told reporters. "I used to dabble in politics once, myself. When my wife got in, she passed me fast."[8]

Harden was an early advocate of women's rights. At a time of GOP recriminations over losing the 1948 presidential election, she teamed with Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine and Representative Frances Bolton of Ohio to criticize the "male dominance" of the Republican Party. The group proposed a voter education program, and Harden called for "better salesmanship for Republicanism and Americanism," urging the party to promote women's issues in its future platforms.[9] In 1957, along with Representative Florence Dwyer of New Jersey, Harden offered a bill to provide equal pay for women, one of a series of proposals that women had championed starting with Winifred Stanley of New York in 1943.[10] Harden believed women had an important part to play in politics, particularly in local organizations and volunteer groups, which would provide the kind of experience they needed to move into higher offices. "It cannot be denied that there is prejudice in varying degrees on the part of men toward women in high positions of governmental or party authority," Harden observed in 1949. But "before we women start making any real progress in politics, we must somehow develop a genuine conviction of our own worth to the world . . . we must feel in our hearts that women are as competent to assess problems and meet situations as men."[11]

Congresswoman Harden represented the district in much the same manner as Virginia Jenckes had during the 1930s, by paying close attention to its economic needs. Harden promoted flood control for the Wabash Valley and secured funding for a dam and recreational facility. She criticized the Defense Department's 1956 plan to close the Atomic Energy Commission's heavy water plant in Dana, Indiana, claiming that 900 people would lose jobs and be added to her district's already long unemployment rolls. As a member of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments, she toured military supply installations in the U.S. and Asia to study ways of improving the armed forces' procurement procedures.[12] As chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Subcommittee of the Government Operations Committee, Harden pushed to have the armed forces and other government branches stop performing work that could be outsourced to private companies. All this was related to a bigger push by the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration to trim the military budget and the overall federal budget. "The Department of Defense," Harden said, echoing a statement by Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson, "supports the basic principle that free competitive enterprise should be fostered by the government."[13] She also authored legislation which repealed the excise tax on leather goods and took an interest in traffic safety and legislation to provide for a uniform national system of highway signage and signals.[14]

Like so many other Republican politicians during the 1950s, Harden's political fortunes were hitched to the wagon of popular war hero and two-term GOP President Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower. As a GOP national committeewoman she had supported Senator Robert Taft of Ohio for the nomination at the contentious 1952 Republican

Convention, but also had played an active part as a member of the credentials committee in allowing the pro-Eisenhower delegates to be seated. She aligned herself closely with Eisenhower once he took office.[15] One political commentator noted that Harden had come to Congress by campaigning and assuring her constituents that she "has always been a forthright woman with a mind of her own." The commentator observed that "now all she seems to want [voters] to know is that she stands all right with the man in the White House. Ike and his personal popularity have taken the temper out of her steel."[16]

That strategy could cut both ways, as Harden found out in 1958. The election was something of a referendum on President Eisenhower's economic policies and an expression of voter frustration with an economic recession. Her district, with industry centralized in Terre Haute, was particularly hard hit by unemployment. Harden lost her campaign for re-election in a tight race to Democrat Fred Wampler, a Terre Haute high school football coach, who prevailed by little more than two percent of the vote. She was one of seven Indiana Republican incumbents who lost in a national Democratic sweep which cost the GOP 47 House seats that fall. Overnight, Indiana's House delegation swung from a 9–2 GOP advantage to a 9–2 Democratic advantage.

Two months after leaving office in January 1959, Harden was appointed special assistant for women's affairs to Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield and served until March 1961.[17] In August 1970 President Richard M. Nixon appointed her to the National Advisory Committee for the White House Conference on Aging. Afterward, she retired to her home in Covington. Cecil Harden died on December 5, 1984, in a nursing home in Lafayette, Indiana.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Cecil Murray Harden," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Indiana Historical Society (Indianapolis, IN). *Papers:* ca. 1938–1984, 12 feet. The collection consists largely of Cecil Harden's personal and political correspondence. Arranged chronologically, these folders contain cards and letters from family and friends as well as correspondence between constituents and colleagues. Also included is correspondence regarding Harden's six congressional campaigns (1948–1958) and her work as special assistant to the postmaster general, as well as five letters from President Eisenhower congratulating her for her congressional work. Also includes Republican committee and convention correspondence and information as well as election results, and legislation sponsored by Harden. Also comprising a substantial part of the collection are her speeches and news releases. Other items in the collection include political and personal expense accounts, appointment books, and calendars. Military academy appointments made by Harden when in Congress, issues such as aging, health and nutrition, and women in politics are also covered. Clippings from various newspapers document her personal and political life. Republican material including Richard M. Nixon speeches and election material are among the miscellaneous items. Speech notes, expense books, check books, note pads, address books, and diaries also are contained in the collection. A finding aid is available in the repository and online: http://www.indianahistory.org/library/manuscripts/collection_guides/harden.html.

"... BEFORE WE WOMEN START MAKING ANY REAL PROGRESS IN POLITICS, WE MUST SOMEHOW DEVELOP A GENUINE CONVICTION OF OUR OWN WORTH TO THE WORLD ... WE MUST FEEL IN OUR HEARTS THAT WOMEN ARE AS COMPETENT TO ASSESS PROBLEMS AND MEET SITUATIONS AS MEN."

—Cecil Harden
Washington Post
March 5, 1949

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Edna Flannery Kelly
1906–1997

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK
1949–1969

Edna Flannery Kelly, a 20-year veteran of the U.S. House and the first woman to represent Brooklyn, New York, in Congress, made her mark on the Foreign Affairs Committee supporting a broad sweep of American Cold War policies ranging from the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to intervention in the Vietnamese civil war. As chair of the Subcommittee on Europe, Congresswoman Kelly took a hard-line approach to America's rivals in the Kremlin and in Soviet-sponsored regimes throughout the world.

Edna Patricia Kathleen Flannery was born on August 20, 1906, in East Hampton, Long Island, New York, the youngest of five daughters raised by Irish immigrants Patrick Joseph Flannery, a horticulturalist, and Mary Ellen McCarthy Flannery. Edna Flannery graduated from East Hampton High School in 1924 and, in 1928, received a B.A. in history and economics from Hunter College in New York City. In the fall of 1928, Edna Flannery married Edward Leo Kelly, a Brooklyn lawyer. The couple raised two children, William and Maura. In January 1942, New York Governor Herbert Lehman appointed Edward Kelly as a judge on the New York City court. Less than eight months later, however, Kelly was killed in an automobile accident.

Only after her husband's death did Edna Kelly seriously consider a career in politics. She had a powerful ally in Irwin Steingut, then the minority leader in the New York Assembly and Brooklyn's political boss. Steingut encouraged her to become active in local political organizations.[1] She reorganized the women's auxiliary of the ailing Madison Democratic Club and served as a research director for the New York state legislature from 1943 until 1949.[2] In 1944 she was elected to the first of three terms on the Democratic executive committee of Kings County, New York, and joined Steingut as a co-leader of the 18th assembly district.

On July 15, 1949, Kings County Democratic leaders chose Kelly as their nominee to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Brooklyn-based U.S. Representative Andrew L. Somers. Local leaders were eager to put a woman on the ballot. "They felt that this was the time to recognize the work of women," Kelly later explained. "I had been a long time working in the Democratic Party."[3] The district contained large Catholic and Jewish populations and was heavily Democratic. Kelly supported President Harry S. Truman's domestic and foreign policies, pledging to back U.S. participation in the United Nations as well as continued financing for the Marshall Plan, aid to Israel, and entry into NATO.[4] On the domestic side, Kelly focused on issues of interest to women, advocating federal dollars for the development of childcare centers and an investigation into high milk prices, as well as her opposition to excise taxes on cosmetics.[5] She defeated her nearest competitor, Liberal Party candidate Jules Cohen, by a 2–1 margin.[6] Kelly became the first Democratic woman to represent New York City in Congress. From the start, however, she stressed her credentials as Representative for all district constituents, not just women. "Please don't describe me as attractive," she chided reporters. "Just say I have common sense!"[7]

Upon her arrival in Congress, Kelly sought an assignment on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Kelly's 44 New York colleagues backed her candidacy to fill a vacancy on the committee, but prominent figures—Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas, former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, and President Truman—asked Kelly to defer that post to

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Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. Kelly refused. Ultimately, the Democratic Caucus of the Ways and Means Committee controlled the assignments, and that group was dominated by Kelly supporters. She received the assignment; FDR, Jr., got a seat, too, when the committee expanded its roster.[8] Kelly served there for her entire House career. She eventually chaired a special Subcommittee on the Canada–United States Interparliamentary group and was Secretary of the House Democratic Caucus. In 1967, she was appointed to the newly formed Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and helped draft its procedures.[9]

Kelly's lasting contributions came in international affairs. Her first vote in Congress was in favor of a bill in early 1950 to increase aid to South Korea. It failed by one vote, and Kelly recalled John McCormack of Massachusetts lamenting, "We're going to resent this vote."[10] Later that year, North Korean communists invaded South Korea. Kelly soon established herself as an implacable foe of communism. In the summer of 1955, she visited the ongoing Geneva Peace talks—the first Soviet-Atlantic Alliance summit of the Cold War—culminating with a great power meeting that included President Dwight Eisenhower, Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden, and French President Edgar Faure. In the midst of the conference, Kelly confronted Secretary of State John Foster Dulles about revelations of massive Russian weapons shipments to Middle Eastern countries. "Mr. Secretary, you leave this ministers' conference and tell the world what the Russians are doing," she demanded. Dulles, no friend of Moscow, answered curtly, "Edna, you want war?" Kelly replied, "You're going to get war if you don't do it."[11] On the home front, she supported the House Committee on Un-American Activities, arguing that it "performed good service."[12] Among her legislative achievements was her successful amendment to President Truman's 1952 bill requesting $7.9 billion in foreign aid, suspending funding to Communist Yugoslavia. The House also approved her amendment to the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, which outlawed the sale of surplus commodities to the Soviet Union or its satellites.

Voters seemed to agree with her hard-line anti-communist positions. In her 1954 campaign, Kelly defeated Republican Abraham Sher, who campaigned for U.S. diplomatic recognition of Communist China, with 73 percent of the vote. Two years later, she defeated Sher by a similar margin.[13] In fact, Kelly never faced serious opposition in the 10 general elections during her two decades in the House.[14]

After she became chair of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe in 1955, Kelly led the first of five fact-finding missions to Europe and the Middle East. Based upon information gleaned from these trips and from her careful study of postwar Europe, Kelly recommended a wide variety of legislation. She was particularly successful introducing resolutions deploring religious persecutions in Eastern Europe. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, from the vantage of her committee, she urged the United States to play a more aggressive role in mediating Arab–Israeli peace accords through the aegis of the United Nations, though to little effect. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy appointed her a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, where she worked closely with her friend U.N. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. At the time of her retirement, she was the third-ranking Member on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Her sources in Europe were legendary. A colleague recalled trips with Kelly were "like going abroad with Mata Hari. She had innumerable contacts . . . that were not available at all to the State Department."[15]

Kelly's influence even touched on U.S. foreign policy in East Asia. During a fact-finding trip to Yugoslavia, Kelly attended a dinner with a senior communist official who had visited Viet Minh leader Ho Chi Minh (who had not been seen in public for months). "Oh, you mean my old friend, Ho? How is he?" Kelly deadpanned, fishing for information. The Yugoslav official warmed to her and reported that Ho had been gravely ill for months, information which the American government had not been able to confirm previously.[16] Kelly personally knew some of the principals in the Saigon government waging civil war with Hanoi during the 1950s. In 1954, she met Ngo Dinh Diem, the Eisenhower administration's hand-picked

Kelly's lasting contributions came in international affairs. At the time of her retirement, Kelly was the third-ranking Member on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Her sources in Europe were legendary. A colleague recalled trips with Kelly were "like going abroad with Mata Hari. She had innumerable contacts . . . that were not available at all to the State Department."

leader in the newly formed Republic of South Vietnam. She remained an ardent backer of Diem, despite later misgivings about corruption within the Saigon government.[17] By 1965, two years after Diem was killed in a U.S.-backed coup, Kelly supported direct American military intervention and remained an unwavering supporter.[18]

By the 1960s, shifting demographics and the decline of the once-powerful New York City Democratic machine threatened Kelly's safe seat. Political alliances were shifting as reformers sought to topple New York City's entrenched Democratic organization.[19] By 1966, Kelly's pro-Vietnam War position had become controversial enough to make her a vulnerable incumbent. She narrowly survived a primary challenge from a Flatbush politician who attacked her pro-Vietnam votes and what he described as Kelly's "anti-Israel" position in the Middle East.[20] In the general election, however, Kelly trounced her GOP opponent and a third-party peace candidate with 73 percent of the vote.[21]

The ethnic and racial composition of Representative Kelly's section of Brooklyn also shifted dramatically.[22] By 1968, the New York legislature had folded Kelly's district into two new ones. A new black majority district, drawing from the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood Kelly once represented, elected Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to serve in Congress. The other new district went to the dean of the New York state delegation and chair of the Judiciary Committee, Representative Emanuel Celler, a 45-year House veteran. Rather than retire, Kelly mounted the first primary challenge against Celler since he entered Congress in 1923. But with her power base scattered between the two districts, she received only 32 percent of the vote, losing by about 8,500 votes. She later charged that Democratic Party leaders and Celler supporters tried to intimidate her: "It was rougher and dirtier than ever before."[23]

When Kelly retired in January 1969, Representative Mel Laird, a Wisconsin Republican and Secretary-Designate of Defense, observed that the Congresswoman's personal "strength" contributed to America "being strong and being prepared and being willing to stand up and be counted when the chips were down in vital areas of the world."[24] Kelly returned to her home in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn and helped coordinate a Library of Congress oral history project with former U.S. Representatives. Residing in Brooklyn until 1981, Kelly suffered a stroke and moved to Alexandria, Virginia, to live with her daughter. She died there on December 14, 1997.

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Marguerite Stitt Church
1892–1990

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM ILLINOIS
1951–1963

After years of assisting the political career of her husband, Ralph Church, and working for various charities, Marguerite Stitt Church won election to the House of Representatives to succeed Congressman Church after his death in 1950. Congresswoman Church sought and gained a seat on the Foreign Affairs Committee, traveling to more than 40 countries and seeing firsthand how U.S. foreign aid was employed in them.

Marguerite Stitt was born in New York City on September 13, 1892, the daughter of William and Adelaide Stitt. She developed an interest in foreign countries at an early age when her parents took her abroad each summer as a child. She attended St. Agatha School in New York City and, later, as a member of Phi Beta Kappa, earned an A.B. in psychology with a minor in economics and sociology from Wellesley College in 1914. After graduation, she taught a biblical history course at Wellesley for a year before enrolling in a masters program in economics and sociology at Columbia University.[1] She completed her graduate degree in 1917 and worked for a year as a consulting psychologist with the State Charities Aid Association of New York City. In 1918, she traveled to Chicago and met Illinois state legislator Ralph Church.[2] The couple married that December and settled in Evanston, Illinois, where they raised three children: Ralph, William, and Marjory. Marguerite Church worked in a succession of organizations devoted to family and children's welfare. In 1934, Ralph Church was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives to the first of seven terms in a seat representing the densely populated suburbs just north of Chicago. Marguerite embarked with him on investigative trips, making her own speaking tour on behalf of Republican presidential campaigns in 1940 and 1944. During and after World War II, at her husband's request, she made several inspection tours of Europe. In Washington she served as president of the Congressional Club, a group of wives and daughters of Members of Congress, the Cabinet, and the Supreme Court. But she later recalled that while he was alive she never seriously considered a political career. "My political life was one of adaptation to his life," Church observed. Nevertheless, her experience as a congressional spouse was critical to her later success, making her "a realist as regards the practical operation of Congress."[3]

Ralph Church died suddenly of heart failure during a House committee hearing in March 1950.[4] Shortly thereafter, GOP leaders in Illinois persuaded Marguerite Church to run for her husband's vacant seat. "If a man had been nominated and made a mistake, you would have said he is stupid," Church said at the time. "If I make a mistake, you will say she is a woman. I shall try never to give you reason to say that."[5] In the general election that fall, she defeated Democrat Thomas F. Dolan with 74 percent of the vote. In her next five re-election bids, she was never seriously challenged, winning between 66 and 72 percent of the vote. "The [local GOP] organization, of course, never considered anybody else after I got in," Church recalled. "They just went along."[6] Much of her success was due to her attention to district needs. She returned to Illinois frequently, opened her home to voters, and personally dictated replies to an average of 600 letters per week. Her cardinal rule was if anyone came asking for help, "never let yourself ask, 'Is he a Republican or a Democrat?' . . . We never made any political distinction whatsoever, and I think that was one reason that in the long run people began to trust me."[7] Church's independence also earned her the respect of colleagues.[8]

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., MEMORIAL LIBRARY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

When Church took her seat in the 82nd Congress (1951–1953), she was assigned to the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments (later Government Operations), where she chaired a special subcommittee investigating President Dwight Eisenhower's reorganization of the Council of Economic Advisers.[9] Church was instrumental in helping to pass recommendations offered by the Second Hoover Commission on efficiency in government.[10] In 1957, Church supported the Civil Rights Bill. She also was one of the first Members to bring African-American guests into the House dining room, when she treated six young newsboys to lunch. Capitol staff told her she would never get through the door. "Well," she replied, the boys have worked hard selling newspapers "and I certainly do not intend to tell them they can't luncheon in the dining room of their own Capitol."[11] The group ate lunch in the dining room. Though not "militant about a woman's rights," Church supported women's rights legislation, including the Equal Pay Bill. She encouraged women entering politics to think of themselves as public servants rather than advocates of feminism. She believed in "equal protection under the law for both men and women, period."[12]

Church left Government Operations in the 84th Congress (1955–1957) to focus exclusively on her Foreign Affairs Committee assignment (which she had received two years earlier). After winning re-election in 1952, she had been offered a spot on the prestigious Appropriations Committee, where her husband once sat and, in fact, where only one woman had previously served. The committee chairman made the offer, but Church declined. "I'm awfully sorry," she replied. "I've spent all summer trying to persuade people that it would be a loss to the country if they didn't put me on the Foreign Affairs Committee. That has become my major interest." She later claimed that she did not want to accept an assignment that, she believed, was made partly as a tribute to her husband.[13] She served on Foreign Affairs until she retired from Congress.

Church's chief interests and influence flowed from her work on the Foreign Affairs Committee, where she was assigned to the Subcommittee on Foreign Economic Policy. She was a skeptic of large foreign-aid bills appropriated for many of America's Cold War allies in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. "The idea that you can win friends and influence people merely by pouring out millions—and it's amounted by this time to billions—never caught my attention or my faith," she recalled.[14] As a member of the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific, she traveled widely to witness firsthand the implementation of American programs. "Some officials protested that this was no place for a lady," Church told a reporter. "I told them I was not a lady. I was a Member of Congress."[15] In 1959, while Ranking Republican Member on the Foreign Economic Policy Subcommittee, she logged more than 40,000 miles in 17 countries.[16] Her experience with a group of tribal women in a remote sub-Saharan African village shaped her view of how foreign aid should be targeted. "These women, I found, didn't want guns; they didn't want atomic plants; they didn't want navies," Church said. "They wanted someone who could show them the next step up from where they were to where they'd like to be."

During the first year of the John F. Kennedy administration, that memory factored into her championing of the Peace Corps, which sought to provide educational and technological support to developing countries through the work of trained college-aged American volunteers.[17] During a September 14, 1961, debate, seven-term Representative H.R. Gross of Iowa launched a verbal diatribe against the Peace Corps program. Gross described it as a "Kiddie Korps," reminiscent of Hitler's youth corps in Nazi Germany, and a "utopian brainstorm" that would exacerbate the U.S. deficit. In response, Congresswoman Church entered the well of the House to speak on behalf of the program, recounting her numerous trips abroad where she had seen foreign-aid dollars misspent and misdirected in the battle for the developing world. "Here is something which is aimed right," Church told colleagues, "which is American, which is sacrificial—and which above all can somehow carry at the human level, to the people of the world, what they need to know; what it is to be free; what it is to have a

next step and be able to take it; what it is to have something to look forward to, in an increase of human dignity and confidence." A GOP colleague recalled that Church's floor speech was critical in persuading a number of reluctant Republicans to support the measure. "You quite literally could see people who had been uncertain or perhaps who had already decided to vote against the Peace Corps sit there, listen to her very quietly and start to rethink," Representative Catherine May of Washington State said."[18] Later that afternoon, the Peace Corps legislation passed the House by a wide margin, 288 to 97.[19]

In 1962, as an advocate of mandatory retirement for Members of Congress and facing reapportionment in her district, Church set her own example by retiring at age 70 after the close of the 87th Congress (1961–1963) in January 1963. She worked on behalf of the Republican presidential campaigns of Barry Goldwater in 1964 and Richard M. Nixon in 1968. She later served on the boards of directors for the Girl Scouts of America and the U.S. Capitol Historical Society. In 1971, President Nixon selected Church to serve on the planning board for the White House Conference on Aging. Marguerite Church resided in Evanston, Illinois, where she died on May 26, 1990.

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MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Evanston Historical Society (Evanston, IL). *Papers:* 1919–1981, 2.5 linear feet. Chiefly personal and political papers, including letters of congratulations from Members of the House of Representatives for Marguerite Church's retirement from office in 1962. Also includes scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings relating to her husband Ralph Church's political career, her husband's death, programs and announcements for official events, press clippings and releases, speeches, and a book relating to a special political committee. A finding aid is available in the repository.

Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), Manuscript Division. *Oral History*: Transcript in the Oral History Collection of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. Sound recording in the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division.

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Ruth Thompson
1887–1970

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM MICHIGAN
1951–1957

Ruth Thompson, a longtime lawyer and judge, became the first woman to represent Michigan in Congress and the first to serve on the House Judiciary Committee. Her legislative interests were eclectic, ranging from a proposal to create a Department of Peace to the establishment of a congressional Page academy. Representative Thompson's career ended abruptly following a contentious fight over the development of a jet fighter base in her northwestern Michigan district.

Ruth Thompson was the first child born to Thomas and Bertha Thompson in Whitehall, Michigan, on September 15, 1887. She attended public schools and graduated from the Muskegon Business College in Muskegon, Michigan, in 1905. Beginning in 1918, she worked in a law office and studied law in night school for six years before she was admitted to the bar in 1924, becoming the first female lawyer in Muskegon County. She also served as the registrar of the county's probate court for 18 years. Thompson was elected judge of probate in Muskegon County in 1925, a position she held for 12 years. In 1938 she won election to a term in the Michigan state house of representatives as the state's first woman legislator. From 1941 to 1942, Thompson worked for the Social Security Board's Old Age and Survivor's Insurance Division in Washington, D.C. She then worked for three years in the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division. In 1945, Thompson went to Headquarters Command of U.S. occupation forces in Frankfurt, Germany, and Copenhagen, Denmark, where she worked on the adjutant general's staff. A year later, she returned to private law practice in Michigan.

In 1950, when Michigan's GOP Representative Albert J. Engel, a 16-year House veteran, declined to run for re-election to campaign for the governorship, Thompson entered the race to fill his vacant seat. In the Republican primary, she topped challenges from the Muskegon County GOP chairman and a former lieutenant governor, relying on grass-roots campaigning and her name recognition from years as a judge. "I started out in my car and stopped all over, ringing doorbells, visiting business places, talking with the people on the streets, and addressing countless gatherings," Thompson recalled, traveling around the northwestern Michigan district. "Many of those whom I met were people I had known when I was probate judge—I'd handled their estates, helped them when they wanted to adopt children, or placed young wards of the court in their homes for boarding."[1] In the general election, she defeated Democrat Noel P. Fox, chairman of the state Labor Mediation Board, with 55 percent of the vote in the rural and Republican-leaning district bordering Lake Michigan. She won comfortable re-election campaigns in 1952 and 1954 with 60 and 56 percent of the vote, respectively. In the latter campaign, Thompson turned back a GOP primary challenge from Robert Engel, son of the former Representative from the district.[2]

When she took her seat in the 82nd Congress (1951–1953) in January 1951, Thompson won a coveted spot on the House Judiciary Committee, becoming the first woman to serve on that panel. There was initial resistance to her appointment, but her work as a judge and as chair of the Michigan prison commission for women, from 1946 to 1950, helped override objections. Admired by colleagues for her work ethic, she remained on the Judiciary Committee throughout her House career, serving as a member of the subcommittees on Bankruptcy and

POCKET CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORY, 84TH CONGRESS

Immigration and Naturalization. In the 84th Congress (1955–1957), Thompson also was appointed to the Joint Committee on Immigration and Nationality Policy.

A proponent of limited federal spending, Thompson opposed much of the Harry S. Truman administration's domestic program. She voted to curtail housing construction provided for under the Public Housing Administration, supported a measure to shrink the size of the federal workforce, and joined other GOP Congresswomen in an effort to publicize how inflation limited the ability of housewives to buy groceries for their families.[3] Thompson also was a critic of President Truman's foreign policy. In the wake of military reverses in the protracted Korean War, she joined conservative Republicans in calling for the removal of Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson and, occasionally, voted against military and economic assistance to Western Europe. In 1953, Thompson proposed the creation of a Department of Peace, which would be represented in the presidential Cabinet. She explained, "All the guns, all the tanks, and all the bombs we are building during these hectic times are not going to save us from our enemies at home or abroad." As a potential secretary for the department, Thompson proposed the evangelist Billy Graham.[4]

Thompson also played a major role in shaping a Capitol Hill institution by introducing a bill to establish a formal academy for House and Senate Pages which would have provided a central dormitory and adult supervision. The Pages, a group of about 75 blue-coated teenage boys who ran errands for Members in the chambers and the congressional offices, came to Washington on patronage appointments from around the country. In addition to their official duties, they took classes at the Library of Congress. But the Pages were responsible for securing their own room and board. "A boy 15 years old isn't old enough to choose his own home and determine his own hours," Thompson said.[5] The reforms that Thompson proposed, however, were not enacted for another 30 years.[6]

Congresswoman Thompson generally preferred committee work to speechmaking. She spent little time on the House Floor and, when she did, it was normally to offer her succinct support for measures introduced by the Judiciary Committee. Thompson supported a "submerged lands" bill, which sought to retain state control from the federal government over coastal waters with oil and mineral deposits. She argued, in part, that if the states lost revenue from the development of these deposits, a principal revenue source for educational programs would decline.[7] In 1953, based on her own experience in an accident with fireworks, she supported a measure by colleague Marguerite Stitt Church of Illinois seeking to restrict the sale of out-of-state, "bootleg" fireworks in jurisdictions in which they were illegal.[8] As a member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization, she supported a 1952 revision of immigration law that came out of her committee.[9]

Thompson's congressional career began to unravel when the Air Force announced that it planned to build a new fighter-interceptor base outside her district, despite her private and public protest that Defense Department officials had originally promised her repeatedly that the base would be located inside her northwestern Michigan district. Thompson also revealed that she had been offered a $1,000 campaign bribe to agree to have the base built in Cadillac, Michigan, outside her congressional district. She had informed Harold E. Talbott, the Secretary of the Air Force, of the bribe and was assured that Cadillac would not be chosen under any circumstances. When that city was named in favor of two others, Thompson protested vigorously to Carl Vinson of Georgia, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Vinson sided with the Congresswoman, and the base was eventually built in Manistee, inside her district.[10] But the political fallout resulting from the delay and additional construction costs, which totaled $5 million, created resentment among Thompson's constituents. In August 1955 local Democratic leaders drew up a recall petition against Thompson, charging that she was "jeopardizing the safety of the nation by prolonging the jet base decision."[11] Though the recall drive failed, it demonstrated just how much the episode had roiled the district. In the August 1956 GOP primary, the 70-year-old Thompson

lost narrowly to Robert P. Griffin (who won the general election and later went on to serve in the U.S. Senate).

After Congress, Thompson returned to Whitehall, Michigan. She died on April 5, 1970, in Allegan County, Michigan.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Ruth Thompson," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI), Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library. Includes a scrapbook containing clippings, greeting cards, telegrams, correspondence, programs, photographs, and miscellaneous loose scrapbook materials. Two phonograph records, "Report from Congress, 1951" and "1956 Republican Congressional Campaign," are stored in the library's record collection.

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Maude Elizabeth Kee
1895–1975

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM WEST VIRGINIA
1951–1965

Maude Elizabeth Kee made history as West Virginia's first woman Member of Congress and as a critical part of that state's Kee family dynasty in the U.S. House, stretching from the start of the New Deal to the Watergate Era. Succeeding her late husband, John Kee, in 1951, Elizabeth Kee went on to chair the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Veterans' Hospitals and became a leading advocate for the coal-mining industry, a major employer in her district. When she left Congress in 1965, her son, James, won her seat, accounting for one of a handful of father-mother-son combinations in Congress.

Maude Etta "Elizabeth" Simpkins was born in Radford, Virginia, on June 7, 1895, the seventh of 11 children born to John Jesse Wade Simpkins and Cora French Hall Simpkins. Her father was a policeman and a railway company employee before moving into real estate and resettling the family in Roanoke, Virginia. Raised in a conservative Republican, Baptist household, she quickly challenged her parents' politics and religion. Her siblings later recalled that she converted to Catholicism and became a Democrat, "as soon as she was old enough."[1] She attended the National Business College and, during World War I, took her first job as a secretary for the business office of the *Roanoke Times* and, later, as a court reporter for a law firm. Elizabeth Simpkins married James Alan Frazier, a railway clerk. They had three children: Frances, James, and a child who died in infancy. The marriage soon fell apart, and James Frazier's attorney during the divorce was John Kee, who fell in love with Elizabeth. In 1925 she moved to Bluefield and, a year later, she married him.[2] John Kee was elected to the 73rd Congress (1933–1935) in the 1932 Roosevelt landslide, as a Democrat from a southeastern West Virginia district. Elizabeth Kee served as his executive secretary throughout his congressional career, including his service after 1949 as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.[3] She once described her job on Capitol Hill as "being all things to all constituents," a combination of "clergyman, lawyer, psychiatrist and family friend."[4] Meanwhile, Kee authored "Washington Tidbits," a weekly column that was syndicated to West Virginia newspapers.

John Kee died suddenly on May 8, 1951, during a committee meeting. Four days later, Elizabeth Kee announced that she planned to seek nomination to fill her late husband's seat.[5] Initially, she was the underdog behind such powerful politicians as Walter Vergil Ross, who had served several terms in the West Virginia legislature, and Sheriff Cecil Wilson. Party leaders proposed that she should be retained as a secretary for the eventual nominee, a suggestion that infuriated her. Her son, James, campaigned heavily with United Mine Workers Association leaders in the district, convincing them that John Kee had several projects developing in Congress and that Elizabeth Kee could attend to them unlike any outsider. That strategy worked as the United Mine Workers Union—a powerhouse in her district which encompassed seven coal-mining counties and the famous Pocahontas coal fields—threw its weight behind the widow Kee. She still faced a formidable challenge from Republican Cyrus H. Gadd, a Princeton, West Virginia, lawyer. Gadd tried to turn the campaign into a referendum on the Harry S. Truman administration, which was at the nadir of its popularity. Gadd also attacked Kee as being beholden to oil interests after Oklahoma Senator Robert Kerr, an oilman and old ally of John Kee's, campaigned for her in the district. The Kee campaign turned the table on Gadd, exposing his major campaign contributors with ties to the oil industry. Kee won the July 17, 1951, special election with a plurality of about 8,500 votes, receiving 58 percent

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

of the total.[6] She was sworn in to office on July 26, 1951, becoming the first woman to represent West Virginia in the U.S. Congress.[7]

Later that year, Kee announced she would not seek re-nomination for the seat, but she reversed herself several weeks later when a flood of requests convinced her to remain in Congress.[8] In the 1952 general election, she again faced GOP challenger Cyrus Gadd, dispatching him with a 35,000-vote margin, capturing 64 percent of the total. She won by a greater plurality than any of her West Virginia House colleagues. She subsequently was re-elected five times by sizable majorities, winning her next two campaigns with more than 60 percent of the vote or more; in 1958, she was unopposed.[9] One local paper's endorsement summed up the depth of her support: "it is absolutely unthinkable . . . for the voters to even consider anyone else to represent them than Mrs. Kee. We don't want her to have to waste valuable time in campaigning, when she could be devoting her energy and 'know how' in furthering legislation and certain projects for the benefit of southern West Virginia."[10]

John Kee had crafted a reputation as a progressive-liberal Democrat in Congress, and it was a political pattern that Elizabeth Kee followed.[11] Throughout her 14 years in Congress, she served on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, eventually chairing the Subcommittee on Veterans' Hospitals. She also was appointed to the Government Operations Committee in the 85th through 87th Congresses (1957–1963) and to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in the 88th Congress (1963–1965). From her Veterans' Affairs seat, Kee became an advocate on behalf of former servicemen and servicewomen, noting, "more attention should be devoted to the welfare of this country's veterans. . . . You just can't economize at the expense of the veteran. And I know the American people—no matter how much they want Government spending cut—I know they feel that way."[12]

Kee generally was a firm supporter of Cold War foreign policy. Of her own volition and on her own dime, she toured seven South American countries in 1952 on a 16,000-mile trip that, in part, fulfilled one of her husband's aspirations.[13] In the 82nd Congress (1951–1953) she voted for an extension of the Marshall Plan's economic aid program to Europe in the form of a $7.5 billion assistance package. In the following two years, she supported $4.4 billion and $5 billion foreign aid bills.[14] Kee would come to question such extravagant outlays during the Dwight Eisenhower administration, particularly when economic conditions deteriorated within her home state. Representative Kee was particularly critical of proposed tariff reductions, which she feared would affect her constituents.[15]

Representing the second largest coal-producing district in the country, Kee became a major advocate for coal miners and related businesses. West Virginia mines accounted for about one-third of the national output by 1957.[16] But the industry suffered heavily from foreign fossil fuel competition and, for much of the 1950s, recession plagued the state economy. Throughout her time in the House, Kee repeatedly defended U.S. coal operations from foreign energy imports, particularly "residual" (heating) fuel oil from South America and natural gas from Canada. "We do not intend to stand idly by and see American workers thrown out of employment by unnecessary concessions to foreign countries," Kee declared.[17] Congresswoman Kee addressed this issue, often casting it as a threat to U.S. national security because it took away American jobs and made the country reliant on imports of critical materials. "If we are to be prudent in our efforts to safeguard the basic security of our country, our own self-preservation, then the Congress of the United States must, now, face up to its responsibility and pass legislation to protect in a fair and just manner our own basic coal industry," she said in a floor speech.[18] Still, Kee could do little to stanch the flow of foreign oil into the U.S. market.

Kee was successful, however, developing a program of economic rejuvenation for West Virginia that mirrored the "Point Four" technological and economic aid that U.S. officials extended to developing nations.[19] Given little support from the Eisenhower administration, Kee and other Catholic supporters threw their full weight behind the candidacy of John F. Kennedy in 1960, playing an influential part in helping Kennedy win the critical West Virginia primary.[20] During the first year of the Kennedy administration, Kee's economic program was adopted as part of the Accelerated Public Works Act, which sought to head off recession by providing federal dollars for public works projects in vulnerable districts. The legislation created the Area

Redevelopment Administration (ARA), which pumped millions of dollars into recession-prone regions in the form of industrial loans, job retraining programs, and grants for water systems. In southern West Virginia, which became a model for the program, ARA money created recreational facilities, parks, and tourist attractions.[21] Kee reminded her colleagues that despite pressing concerns abroad that required huge allocations of American aid, immediate problems at home still needed to be addressed. Foreign aid bills were important, Kee admitted, "But not more important than bread and milk for coal miners' children, good jobs for their fathers, new industries and increased business activities for economically depressed American towns and cities," she said.[22]

In 1964, Kee declined to seek an eighth term in the House due to poor health.[23] Her son and longtime administrative assistant, James, won the Democratic nomination. That November, when he won easy election with 70 percent of the vote, Maude Kee became the first woman in Congress to be succeeded directly by one of her children. From 1933 to James Kee's retirement, when the district was reapportioned out of existence prior to the 1972 elections, the Kee family represented West Virginia in the House. Elizabeth Kee retired to Bluefield, where she died on February 15, 1975.

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Vera Daerr Buchanan

1902–1955

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM PENNSYLVANIA

1951–1955

Bookended by tragedy, Vera Buchanan's brief tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives began in 1951 as an extension of her late husband's legislative efforts representing blue-collar steel workers in southwest Pittsburgh. But by the time she stood for re-election 18 months later in the newly reapportioned, more center-city district, Buchanan demonstrated that she was not merely a caretaker of the office her husband once held, but a skilled politician in her own right.

Vera Daerr was born in Wilson, Pennsylvania, on July 20, 1902, daughter of John Daerr and Jennie Leasure Daerr.[1] She grew up in the steel mill town of Duquesne, Pennsylvania, and attended local public and parochial schools. After high school, she worked as a secretary for a Duquesne steel company. In 1929, Vera Daerr married Frank Buchanan, an automobile dealer and teacher, and the couple raised twin daughters, Jane and Joan. In 1942, Vera Buchanan helped her husband win election as mayor of McKeesport, a post which he held for four years. Vera operated a beauty shop and was a member of the Democratic Women's Guild. As the first lady of McKeesport, she conducted a listening campaign to familiarize herself with the needs of constituents and began cultivating a support base for future election campaigns. In May 1946, Frank won the special election to fill the vacancy left in the 79th Congress (1945–1947) by the resignation of Representative Samuel Weis. The Congressman was re-elected to the next three consecutive terms. Serving on the Banking and Currency Committee, Frank Buchanan became an expert in housing legislation and earned a reputation as a bright, candid, and liberal Member of the House. He chaired a select committee that brought to light extensive corporate and union lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill.[2] Vera Buchanan served as her husband's secretary during his five-year tenure in Congress.

Vera Buchanan's leap into elective politics came unexpectedly when Congressman Buchanan died suddenly on April 27, 1951, at the age of 48. The Pennsylvania Democratic Party chose his widow to run for the vacated seat; she accepted the invitation. "We were a very close-knit family," Buchanan later explained. "Frank's death was a great shock. I decided to run because I wanted to see the things he believed in carried on."[3] Part of Buchanan's motivation was to clear her husband's name after he had been attacked by a redbaiting columnist. Prior to his death, Frank Buchanan had developed a lengthy refutation which he was never able to deliver on the House Floor—and Vera Buchanan wanted to put it on the record herself.[4]

Critics suggested that Vera Buchanan was running as a contender based strictly on her husband's name. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* despaired that "Mrs. Buchanan's foremost attribute was that she was the widow of Frank Buchanan."[5] Vera Buchanan dispelled any question of her legitimacy in a tough, quick-witted campaign that echoed her husband's positions. "I'll be proud to support a President—Harry S. Truman—who has labored and devoted the highest office in the land to restoring law and order in the world," Buchanan told supporters days before the election. Her opponent, Republican Clifford W. Flegal, the McKeesport city controller, attacked Truman and Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson for being soft on communism and for the unpopular Korean War. When Flegal challenged Buchanan to a debate, she retorted: "The oldest saw in politics is 'Let's debate.' This is no time for hot air. It's time for decision. If my opponent hasn't made up his mind at this late date, it's just too bad.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

My mind is made up."[6] In the July 24, 1951, special election, Buchanan defeated Flegal with nearly 62 percent of the vote and was sworn into Congress by House Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas a week later, on August 1.[7] Following the 1950 Census, Pennsylvania lost three congressional seats. In the redrawn district, which encompassed heavily unionized sections of Pittsburgh, her native McKeesport, and other steel-making communities, Buchanan proved an even more powerful incumbent. In 1952 and 1954, she defeated GOP opponents by 2–1 margins.[8]

In the House, Vera Buchanan served on three committees: Banking and Currency, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and Public Works. In early 1952, she resigned her Merchant Marine and Fisheries post to concentrate on her remaining assignments.[9] As had her husband, Congresswoman Buchanan employed her daughter, Jane, to serve as her secretary.

A solid supporter of most Truman administration policies, Buchanan became a critic of the Dwight Eisenhower administration's efforts to roll back domestic welfare programs. Vera Buchanan, like her husband, took a special interest in housing legislation. In 1954, she criticized Eisenhower's plan to halve the number of annual public housing projects over a four-year period. Noting that federal housing in McKeesport and Pittsburgh had been a success, she urged the Republican majority in the House to restore the figure to 75,000 per year, where it had been under President Truman. "An American family . . . should have a chance to live in decent housing," Buchanan said in a floor speech. "Housing is one of the most important factors in a child's environment. We have ample evidence that juvenile delinquency flourishes out of all proportion in slum areas, and out of juvenile delinquency grows vicious adult crime."[10] She attacked efforts to remove price controls on grocery commodities and rental units, noting that the "cost of living is nearing an all-time high, but the legislation to deal with the problem is nearing an all-time low."[11] For these and other of her legislative forays, Buchanan earned a reputation as a trusted ally among her district's union members and other laborers. Buchanan also pushed for the study of the flood problems plaguing her district, insisting on federal funding for the Turtle Creek Valley Flood Control Project, after a series of floods devastated local housing and industry.[12]

Congresswoman Buchanan demonstrated an independence from parochial interests. She supported the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway Project, and her appointment to the Public Works Committee in 1952 led to open speculation that the long-stalled piece of legislation would begin moving through the House.[13] Initially, opinion in her district had been against its development, but it became more evenly split after the discovery of the large Labrador iron ore deposits in Canada (iron was a critical raw material for steel production). Buchanan's reasoning was simple and extended beyond the narrow focus of her district. She argued that since the seaway would be built either jointly with Canada or without any U.S. involvement, that it was in the "national self-interest and the self-interest of every industry and business in the United States [to] require that our Government have a full, equal voice in the construction and operation of so important a waterway—a full and equal voice on every aspect of the operation."[14] The House eventually approved U.S. participation in the St. Lawrence project in 1956.

When President Eisenhower took office in 1953, Buchanan raised concerns about the bellicose rhetoric of his new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. Dulles was then developing his concept of "massive retaliation," which threatened Soviet leaders in the Kremlin with instant nuclear annihilation for any military provocations—whether conventional or nuclear—at any point around the globe.[15] While suspicious of Moscow's designs, Buchanan nevertheless expressed concern that Washington officials were relying too much on the threat of nuclear deterrence. "But are we doing enough, trying hard enough to restore sanity and peace—real peace—to the world?" she said in a floor speech. "Have we tried every possible avenue of approach? Have we left anything undone which could possibly—even as a long chance—mean enduring peace and the end of the constant danger of atomic incineration of mankind?"[16]

In June of 1955, during her third term in Congress, Buchanan became ill. A condition initially diagnosed as bronchial pneumonia turned out to be terminal late-stage cancer. Despite the diagnosis, Buchanan tried to carry on her congressional work from her hospital bed—first at the Bethesda Naval Hospital and, later, for the final three months of her life, in a hospital in McKeesport. During her final days, House Speaker John McCormack of Massachusetts visited Buchanan. When he rose to leave, Buchanan said, "Good-bye, my friend." The Speaker replied, "I won't say 'good-bye,' just 'so long.' I'll see you up in the Gallery."[17] Buchanan passed away on November 26, 1955, becoming the first woman Member to die in office. "I learned to know Vera Buchanan as I had known Frank Buchanan, loyal, hard-working, intelligent, and considerate," eulogized Representative Abraham Multer of New York. "I can think of no greater tribute . . . they had a keen sense of devotion to the services of the people of this country—not only their district but of the country."[18]

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Gracie Bowers Pfost
1906-1965

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM IDAHO
1953–1963

A five-term Representative from Idaho, Gracie Pfost was a consistent critic of private gain at the expense of the public interest. The press dubbed Congresswoman Pfost "Hell's Belle" for her unremitting crusade to develop the proposed Hells Canyon High Dam and hydroelectric facility as a federally managed program. The massive project, which would have been situated along the Snake River in her northern Idaho district, took advantage of one of the longest gorges in the country. "It is a natural dam site," Pfost declared. "All we need is to plug up that river with some concrete."[1]

Gracie Bowers was born in an Ozark Mountain log cabin on March 12, 1906, in Harrison, Arkansas, daughter of William L. Bowers and Lily E. Wood Bowers. Her family, which included four siblings, moved to Idaho in 1911. She quit high school at age 16 and took a job as a milk analyst for the Carnation Milk Company in Nampa, Idaho. A year later, in 1923, Gracie Bowers married John W. "Jack" Pfost (pronounced "post"), her supervisor and a master mechanic who was twice her age.[2] During their long marriage, Jack Pfost remained an enduring source of support for his wife's political career which, she admitted, was "more or less a joint venture with him."[3] The couple had no children. In 1929, Gracie Pfost graduated from the Link's Business School in Boise, Idaho. During this time, she became involved in politics on the local level, working as a temporary replacement for the Canyon County clerk, auditor, and recorder. She ended up working full-time in this position for a decade after her predecessor resigned.[4] In 1941, after losing her first bid by 1,500 votes, Pfost was elected treasurer of Canyon County, a post she held for another decade. She also served as a delegate to five consecutive Democratic National Conventions, beginning in 1944. Throughout the late 1940s and into the 1950s, she and her husband owned and operated a real estate business.

In 1950, Gracie Pfost won the Democratic nomination in the race for the open congressional seat which represented all of northern Idaho, including the panhandle area up to the Canadian border. She lost the election by 783 votes to GOP contender John T. Wood, a 72-year-old doctor and World War I veteran. In 1952, at the urging of her husband, Pfost again challenged Wood.[5] She entered the Democratic primary and easily trumped three male challengers. With enthusiasm, Pfost ran an exhaustive general election campaign. There were no television stations on which to advertise, so she and her husband canvassed the 400-mile long district in their Pontiac car, logging more than 20,000 miles.[6] Pfost received a boost from Eleanor Roosevelt, who used her syndicated column to attack Wood's record in Congress, particularly his efforts to derail the United Nations. Her slogan contained a pun on her name: "Tie Your Vote to a Solid Post—Gracie Pfost for Congress."[7] In a state that went for Dwight Eisenhower on a 2–1 basis (her district favored Eisenhower by 25,000 votes), she narrowly edged out Wood by 591 votes of about 109,000 cast.[8]

When she was seated in the House in January 1953 as Idaho's first woman in Congress, Pfost earned assignments on the Public Works, the Post Office and Civil Service, and the Interior and Insular Affairs committees. Jack Pfost worked as an unpaid assistant in his wife's office and was her constant companion. Her assignment on Interior and Insular Affairs was a plum for a junior Member from the West because of the vast tracts of public land which fell under the panel's jurisdiction. From 1955 to 1961, Gracie Pfost chaired the Interior and Insular

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Affairs Subcommittee on Public Lands, which had oversight of more than 450 million acres of federally managed land.[9] She first attracted national attention as a member of the Select Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations, which probed the finances of such philanthropic organizations as the Ford Foundation and the Fund for the Republic, to determine if grants were distributed for "un-American" activities. On May 24, 1954, Pfost and Wayne Hays of Ohio walked out of the hearings and accused the committee of permitting unreliable testimony against foundation employees and failing to require witnesses to submit prepared statements or digests of testimony prior to their appearances. As a result of their withdrawal, the committee voted in July to end its hearings. Pfost dissented from the final committee report, which concluded that several foundations had unwittingly subsidized subversive ventures.

Pfost was an adept and calculating campaigner. During the 1954 campaign, she attended a county fair and challenged GOP opponent, Erwin H. Schwiebert, to a log-rolling contest. "If a man dumps me, he's no gentleman," she observed. "If I dump him, I'm a superwoman."[10] She fell off the log first but won the election by about 9,000 votes. She fastidiously cultivated her constituent base, sending personal congratulatory notes to each high school graduate in her district and a card and childcare book to new parents.[11] From 1954 through the next three elections, she won by pluralities of 55 percent or more and ran ahead of the Democratic presidential ticket in 1956 and 1960. In 1956, she beat Louise Shattuck, a staffer for a former GOP Idaho governor, by 10 percentage points. In 1958, Pfost won a personal-best 65 percent of the vote. After 1952, she was not challenged in the Democratic primaries until 1960 and, then, won handily.[12]

A dam became the defining point of Pfost's political work. It was during the 1952 campaign that she had earned the nickname, "Hell's Belle," because of her stalwart support for the construction of a publicly funded and operated dam at Hells Canyon. As part of the Snake River project on the Idaho–Oregon border, the proposed dam would provide hydroelectric power and irrigation for a large section of the Northwest. Advocating publicly funded construction, she fought stubbornly against private power interests and their political allies, whom she branded "the gimmie-and-get boys in the private electric utilities."[13]

Throughout the 1950s, the subject of Snake River development was a divisive issue in the politics of the Northwest. Characteristic of a national debate during the decade, grounded in the legitimacy of federally operated programs such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, advocates of regional development through low-cost public power squared off against those backing private utilities.[14] In April 1953, Pfost introduced the first of several bills that proposed construction of a massive, multi-purpose dam across the Snake River at Hells Canyon to provide cheap electricity and construction jobs to spur Idaho's flagging economy. Regional power companies objected, lobbying instead for the development of a series of three smaller dams. "There can be no argument that the high dam at Hells Canyon will give the people the most for the least expenditure on their part," Pfost told colleagues in a floor speech.[15] Later, the Congresswoman claimed that she was the target of a smear campaign by private utilities companies in her own state—as she dubbed it, the effort to "Get Gracie Pfost." "I don't intend to be bluffed, bullied or frightened by the private monopolies," she declared.[16]

But the Congresswoman could only bitterly protest in August 1955 when the Federal Power Commission granted the Idaho Power Company a license to construct the three-dam proposal. Pfost charged that the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration was dominated by the big business interests which scuttled federal oversight. When President Eisenhower sought U.S. funding to construct the High Aswan Dam in Egypt, she protested that Hells Canyon should come first. "I think it is time for the administration to stop double-talking and get the high Hells Canyon Dam under construction," she said.[17] Pfost and her supporters suffered a final defeat in July 1957 when a majority of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, all the Republicans and two swing Democrats—with firm backing from President Eisenhower—voted to discard her dam construction bill. Pfost claimed that the

rejection of federal funding was "strangling the lifeblood of the Pacific Northwest."[18]

Hells Canyon did not completely eclipse other legislative interests for Pfost. She also had a critical hand in making sure that the legislation approving Alaskan statehood in 1958 passed the House.[19] Pfost was an outspoken advocate of a 10 percent pay hike for postal employees.[20] In 1956, she supported a school construction bill to provide for new schools to meet the millions of "Baby Boom" grade-schoolers who were just then entering the educational system.[21] That same year she pushed for passage of a farm bill to help relieve a sagging agricultural commodities market.[22] In 1962, Congress passed a bill that Pfost authored to construct the $3.5 million Mann Creek irrigation project in Idaho.[23] Pfost also supported the Equal Rights Amendment.[24]

With Jack Pfost's sudden death in 1961, Gracie Pfost lost not only her husband, but her closest political confidant. In 1962, when Idaho Senator Henry C. Dworshak died, Pfost chose to leave her safe House seat to run as the Democratic candidate in the fall election to fill the remainder of Dworshak's unexpired term. Pfost ran against former Governor Len B. Jordan, a Boise rancher who had been appointed three months earlier by Idaho's GOP governor to an interim position in the Senate. Pfost lost narrowly by only 4,881 votes (51 to 49 percent), failing to carry her home county of Canyon. After her political defeat, she was appointed Special Assistant for Elderly Housing at the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Gracie Pfost, suffering for several years from Hodgkin's disease, served at the FHA until she died at age 59 on August 11, 1965, at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

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MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Idaho State Historical Society (Boise, ID). *Papers:* 1940–1962, 4.5 cubic feet. Correspondence, clipping files, campaign material, and miscellaneous papers relating to the political career of Gracie Bowers Pfost, including her campaigns for re-election as Canyon County (Idaho) treasurer (1940–1950), her service as U.S. Representative from Idaho (1952–1958); and her campaign for a U.S. Senate seat, 1962. A finding aid is available in the repository.

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A dam became the defining point of Pfost's political work. It was during the 1952 campaign that she had earned the nickname, "Hell's Belle," because of her stalwart support for the construction of a publicly funded and operated dam at Hells Canyon. As part of the Snake River project on the Idaho–Oregon border, the proposed dam would provide hydroelectric power and irrigation for a large section of the Northwest.

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Leonor K. Sullivan
1902–1988

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MISSOURI
1953–1977

As one of America's early consumer advocates, Leonor K. Sullivan authored many of the protective laws that Americans have come to take for granted. Initially, it was a lonely undertaking. As Representative Sullivan recalled of her early years in Congress, "Those of us interested in consumer legislation could have caucused in an elevator."[1] During her 12 terms in Congress, Sullivan left her mark on a variety of issues, becoming one of the more influential Congresswomen to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Leonor Alice Kretzer was born on August 21, 1902, in St. Louis, Missouri, one of nine children of Frederick William Kretzer and Nora (Jostrand) Kretzer. Her father was a second-generation German tailor. Since her parents did not have the resources to send her to college, Kretzer worked at a local telephone company and took night classes at Washington University in St. Louis, focusing on vocational psychology. During the 1930s, she worked as an instructor in business and accounting at the St. Louis Comptometer School; she later became placement director there before becoming director of the St. Louis Business School.[2] On December 27, 1941, she married John Berchmans Sullivan, a freshman Congressman from St. Louis. Leonor Sullivan worked as her husband's administrative assistant and campaign manager in five primary and election campaigns; during that stretch of time, her husband was defeated twice, only to be returned to office in the subsequent election.[3]

When John Sullivan died on January 29, 1951, Missouri Democratic leaders refused to nominate Leonor Sullivan to run in the special election to fill the vacancy. "We don't have anything against you," they told Sullivan, "we just want to win."[4] Their chosen candidate, Harry Schendel, lost to Republican Claude I. Bakewell. Leonor Sullivan, meanwhile, took a year-long position as an administrative aide to Missouri Representative Theodore Irving because she lacked the funds to amass her own congressional campaign without the backing of the Democratic Party. In 1952, Sullivan announced her candidacy for her husband's reapportioned district. She defeated seven contenders in the Democratic primary, including the party-endorsed candidate, who made a campaign promise that if elected, he would give Sullivan a job on his staff. Running in the general election as "Mrs. John B. Sullivan," she defeated her Republican opponent, Bakewell, by a 2–1 margin, to earn a seat in the 83rd Congress (1953–1955). During the campaign, Sullivan claimed greater experience and qualification than the incumbent because of her years in Washington working for her husband's office, a message that resonated with many of the late Congressman's former supporters. After that campaign, Sullivan, the first woman elected to Congress from her state (and the only one until the 1990s), was never seriously challenged; she captured her next 11 elections with between 65 and 79 percent of the vote.[5]

Congresswoman Sullivan quickly established herself as a protector of working Americans and consumers. In 1953, she urged her colleagues to amend the income tax law to allow widows and working mothers to make deductions for childcare. Sullivan also delivered a speech on the House Floor against proposed cuts to the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor. In 1957 she wrote and successfully guided into law the first Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act. She also sponsored legislation to protect consumers from hazardous substances, harmful food color additives, and cosmetics. A committed consumer advocate, in 1962 Sullivan urged her House colleagues to pass stricter

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consumer protection legislation. "You are faced with an arena of supreme importance to the lives and health and safety and well being of the American people—all of the foods we eat, all of the drugs and devices we use for health purposes, all of the cosmetics used not only by women but in increasing numbers by men, as well."[6]

In 1959, working with Senator Hubert Humphrey, Sullivan authored the Food Stamp Act. Under the new legislation, low-income Americans would no longer have to rely upon disbursements of surplus food, but instead would be able to use coupons to buy food at grocery stores. During the second Dwight D. Eisenhower administration, however, the Agriculture Department refused to allocate funds for the program, which the conservative Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, considered improper. Upon the urging of Sullivan, the John F. Kennedy administration reinstated an experimental food stamp program in 1961. In 1964, Sullivan authored legislation to increase the scope of the Kennedy initiative, making food stamps available for poor Americans nationally. On the House Floor, she maintained, "The States and localities, which now bear a heavy financial burden under the direct distribution system, would save added millions under the food stamp plan. Who loses, then, under the plan? Hunger. Only hunger loses."[7] President Lyndon Johnson incorporated the legislation into his "War on Poverty" in 1964, but not before a sharp partisan battle within the Agricultural Committee and the President's decision to couple the food stamp measure with increased subsidies for wheat and cotton farmers.

One of Sullivan's great legislative triumphs came when she served as the House Floor manager for the 1968 Consumer Credit Protection Act. The bill established "truth in lending" provisions, requiring lenders to provide consumers with information about the cost of credit. "Now we come to the moment of truth in truth in lending," Sullivan declared to her colleagues during debate. "Will we give the consumer the whole truth in lending, or just part of the truth?"[8] When President Johnson signed the groundbreaking legislation, he praised "that able Congresswoman from Missouri," noting that Sullivan "fought for a strong effective bill when others would have settled for less."[9] Two years later, Sullivan continued her efforts to protect American consumers when she authored the Fair Credit Reporting Act, a bill prohibiting credit companies from distributing false credit information.

By 1969, after 15-term veteran Representative Frances Bolton of Ohio had retired, Sullivan emerged as the doyenne of women in Congress. The first woman appointed to the House Democratic Steering Committee, which determines Democratic committee assignments, she also was elected secretary of the House Democratic Caucus, an organization to determine party strategy and consensus, for five terms. During her 24 years in the House, Sullivan served on the Banking and Currency Committee, the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and the Joint Committee on Defense Production. During the 93rd and 94th Congresses (1973–1977), she chaired Merchant Marine and Fisheries, making her only the sixth woman in congressional history to chair a committee. As chairwoman, her accomplishments included passage of the 1976 Fishery and Conservation Management Act, an environmental bill which established a 200-mile fisheries conservation zone off the coasts of the United States.

Though she defended the rights of women consumers, Sullivan did not embrace the larger feminist agenda. She was the only woman Member to vote against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the 92nd Congress (1971–1973), because she thought it threatened home life and existing legislation which protected women in the workplace. "I believe that wholesome family life is the backbone of civilization," Sullivan said. Passage of the ERA would "accelerate the breakup of home life."[10] She also feared that the amendment would break down hundreds of protective labor, marital, and family statutes in the states. Finally, the ERA offended her sensibilities. The "ERA says you are my equal," she once observed, but "I think I'm a whole lot better."[11] Sullivan also opposed efforts by younger women Members to create a special caucus for women's issues, which came about only after her retirement.[12] Nevertheless, Sullivan supported the Equal Pay Act of 1963, a first step toward the equal pay for equal work doctrine. She also backed an amendment to the 1964

Civil Rights Act that stipulated an end to sexual discrimination in the workplace. In 1961, Sullivan and her fellow Congresswomen marched into Speaker Sam Rayburn's office to request the appointment of Representative Martha Griffiths of Michigan to the influential Joint Economic Committee.[13]

In 1976, at age 74, Sullivan declined to seek a 13th term and was succeeded by Richard A. Gephardt, who eventually became Democratic Leader in the House. Her age, but principally her disaffection with the institution of Congress, accounted for her decision to retire. She explained in a post-Watergate interview that despite contemporary attempts at congressional reform, she was "disturbed at what's happening to the whole government . . . the corruption that always goes on . . . the lack of morals . . . too many people thinking, 'So what?'"[14] She returned to St. Louis and moved into a home she had bought long before on the south side of the city, atop a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. Passing riverboat captains often blew their ships' horns to salute Sullivan, who had been a benefactor of the barge industry during her time on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee.[15] In 1980, she married retired millionaire businessman Russell L. Archibald. He died in March 1987. Sullivan died in St. Louis on September 1, 1988.

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Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), Schlesinger Library, http://www.radcliffe.edu/schles. *Oral History:* 1974–1976, four folders. An interview of Leonor Sullivan by Katie Louchheim.

St. Louis University School of Law (St. Louis, MO). *Papers:* 1953–1976, 350 linear feet. Congressional papers and correspondence, including materials relating to her work on the Merchant Marine Committee, the Banking and Currency Committee, food and drug laws, and issues relating to St. Louis. The collection contains access restrictions. A finding aid is available in the repository.

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3 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html.
4 Susan Tolchin, *Women in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976): 106.
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6 Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members*: 236.
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13 Leonor Sullivan's former administrative assistant claimed that she led the Congresswomen on a march to Speaker Rayburn's office to demand that he fulfill Griffiths's request for a Ways and Means position in 1962. However, Griffiths recalls her colleagues aiding her on capturing the Joint Economic position in 1961. See, Kaptur, *Women of Congress*: 110; Martha Griffiths, Oral History Interview, 29 October 1979, *U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress*, Manuscript Room, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: 51; 136.
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Eva Kelly Bowring
1892–1985

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEBRASKA
1954

In 1954, Eva Bowring arrived in the Senate with the vocabulary of a witty cattle wrangler and impressive credentials as a state political figure and prosperous businesswoman. Appointed to fill the vacancy resulting from the death of Senator Dwight Griswold of Nebraska, Bowring had become one of Nebraska's wealthiest women through her ranching enterprises and was a leading GOP figure in the state. Her transition from riding the range on her sprawling ranch to the U.S. Senate Chamber was abrupt and somewhat unexpected. "I'm going to have to ride the fence a while until I find where the gates are," Bowring told a reporter shortly after arriving at the Capitol.[1]

Eva Kelly was born on January 9, 1892, in Nevada, Missouri. She attended school in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1911, at age 19, she married Theodore Forester, a grain and feed salesman, and the Foresters settled in Kansas City. When Theodore Forester died in 1924, Eva was left to raise the couple's three young sons: Frank, Harold, and Donald.[2] To support her family, Eva moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, and took up Theodore's work selling livestock feed; she drove as many as 40,000 miles a year around rural Nebraska roads in an unreliable old car. Once, near Merriman, Nebraska, the car broke down. A homesteader named Art Bowring happened to be driving by and stopped to help. In 1928, Eva married Bowring, who had served as county commissioner and went on to win election as a representative and senator in the state legislature. The family settled on Art Bowring's ranch, the Barr-99, near Merriman in the Sand Hill Country of Cherry County. The couple expanded their land-holdings and eventually managed a prosperous 13,000-acre operation. After Arthur's death in 1944, Eva Bowring operated the Barr-99, becoming the first woman to chair the Nebraska Stockgrowers Association Brand Committee. In her capacity as a rancher, Bowring became involved with Nebraska Republican politics, eventually serving as the state's first woman county GOP chair. From 1946 to 1954, Bowring served as vice chair of the Nebraska Republican Central Committee and as its director of women's activities.

Bowring's transition to public office was sudden. Governor Robert B. Crosby appointed Bowring on April 16, 1954, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Dwight Palmer Griswold. Bowring, who described herself as a "forward looking Republican," refused the offer initially. She was reluctant to leave her 1,200 head of cattle and the calving and branding work that she still enjoyed and actively participated in at age 62. "This is one cross I don't think I have to bear, Bob," Bowring told the governor. But Crosby was persuasive. After a private meeting with the governor, Bowring emerged from the office to tell reporters she accepted the appointment. She explained that after years of exhorting GOP women into politics, she could not now reverse course herself, noting that, "when a job is offered to you, take it. Men can refuse but women are increasingly important in political life."[3] Bowring was sworn in as the first Nebraska woman to serve in Congress on April 26, 1954, for the term that would end, according to state law, at the next general election. In November 1954 a candidate would be selected to finish out the final two months of Griswold's term, as well as a successor to the full six-year term starting in the 84th Congress (1955–1957). At the time of her appointment, Bowring joined the Senate's only other woman Member, Margaret Chase Smith of Maine. Smith wrote that Bowring's appointment "did the women of America as well as the women of Nebraska a great honor."[4] For her

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., MEMORIAL LIBRARY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

part, Bowring expressed hope that her Senate colleagues would "remember I'm just a girl from cow country."[5] Her guiding philosophy was succinct: "I've not been one who thought the Lord should make life easy; I've just asked Him to make me strong."[6] According to custom, the state's senior Senator, Hugh Butler, accompanied her to the front of the chamber for the swearing in. Vice President Richard Nixon, presiding over the ceremony, relayed a message from Butler to viewers in the gallery: "The senior Senator from Nebraska has asked the chair to announce that no implication should be drawn from the fact that the senior Senator from Nebraska is a widower and the junior Senator from Nebraska is a widow."[7]

Bowring was appointed to three committees: Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Labor and Public Welfare, and Post Office and the Civil Service. The needs of Nebraska's agricultural constituents were familiar to Bowring and were the focus of her only two major floor speeches. Bowring declared her backing for a program of flexible agricultural price supports proposed by the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration to reduce production fluctuations that often resulted in surplus food staples. She argued that the measure would "cushion farmers against wide breaks in the market on basic commodities," economize land use, and produce a more stable market. "In the long run, rigid price supports take from the farmer more than he receives," Bowring concluded. "They encourage him to deplete his soil. They saddle the markets with surpluses which give him no opportunity to realize full parity. They destroy the normal relationship of feed and livestock prices. . . . They place the farmers in such a position that they lose much of their freedom to make management decisions." A number of her colleagues who attended the speech, including Prescott Bush of Connecticut and Albert Gore, Sr., of Tennessee, praised her "incisiveness" and "intimate grasp" of the workings of the agriculture market.[8] In addition to the commodities pricing bill, Bowring and Senator Butler introduced a measure for the construction of the Red Willow Dam and Reservoir as part of the Missouri River Basin Project. Bowring also sponsored legislation providing for flood control works in the Gering Valley of Nebraska. On August 18, 1954, Bowring had the distinction of joining a select handful of women who presided over the Senate when she was named acting president *pro tempore* for the day's debates.[9]

In June 1954, Bowring announced that she would not seek election to the full six-year term or the short term to follow the November general election. After Hugh Butler's death on July 1, 1954, she became Nebraska's senior Senator. On November 8, she was succeeded by another woman, Republican Hazel Abel, whom she presented before the Senate. After leaving office, Bowring returned to her Barr-99 ranch and later served on the national advisory council of the National Institutes of Health from 1954 to 1958 and from 1960 to 1961. President Dwight Eisenhower also appointed Bowring to the Board of Parole at the Department of Justice, where she served from 1956 to 1964. Eva Bowring died on January 8, 1985, in Gordon, Nebraska.

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3 "Nebraska Woman Named to Griswold Senate Seat," 17 April 1954, *New York Times*: 1; Simpson, "Senator in a Hustle: She'll Probably Put Her Brand on Congress."

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Mary E. "Betty" Farrington
1898–1984

DELEGATE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM HAWAII
1954–1957

Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Farrington emerged in the mid-1950s as the leading advocate for Hawaiian statehood, serving three years in the House as a territorial delegate. Her political partnership with her husband, Joe Farrington, another champion of statehood, spanned decades and prepared her to succeed him in Congress after his death in 1954. Years before she was elected to Congress, *McCall's* magazine chose Farrington, publisher of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and director of the National Federation of Republican Women's Clubs, as one of "Washington's 10 Most Powerful Women," a list that included Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Chase Smith, and Bess Truman.[1]

Mary Elizabeth Pruett was born to American missionaries Robert Lee and Josie Baugh Pruett, native Tennesseans—on May 30, 1898, in the Tsukiji (foreign resident) section of Tokyo, Japan. She attended the Tokyo Foreign School before the family resettled in 1906 in Hollywood, California. After Mary Pruett graduated from Hollywood High School, she enrolled at the exclusive Ward-Belmont Women's Junior College in Nashville, Tennessee. Two years later, she transferred to the University of Wisconsin at Madison and earned a journalism B.A. in 1918. During her studies, she met Joseph Farrington, son of Wallace R. Farrington, publisher of the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, and an early advocate of Hawaiian annexation and statehood.[2] They married in May 1920 and, three years later, when President Warren G. Harding appointed Wallace Farrington territorial governor of Hawaii, Joe and Mary returned to the islands to manage the *Star Bulletin*. The couple raised two adopted children, John and Beverly.[3] In the early 1930s, Joe Farrington was elected to the Hawaii territorial senate and began a long political career in which he relied heavily on his wife for advice. "He didn't make a move without talking to me," Mary Farrington recalled.[4] Joe Farrington soon succeeded his father as the newspaper's general manager. By the mid-1940s, Betty Farrington assumed her husband's duties as publisher and president of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, a position she held until the 1960s.

In 1942, Joe Farrington, was elected to the first of six consecutive terms in the U.S. House as a Republican territorial delegate from Hawaii, propelling Betty Farrington into national politics, too. Throughout Joe Farrington's dozen years in Washington, the Farringtons were frequent entertainers and popular on the capital's society circuit.[5] Betty Farrington immersed herself in party politics, serving as president of the District League of Republican Women from 1946 to 1948. On January 1, 1949, she became president of the National Federation of Women's Republican Clubs (later named the National Federation of Republican Women), which included more than 500,000 members.[6] Farrington energized the group by creating a school of politics in 1950 at which precinct workers received briefings on party history, current initiatives, and political techniques.[7]

Joe Farrington suffered from a heart ailment throughout his congressional service but remained dedicated to bringing Hawaii into the Union. In June 1954, while intensively lobbying colleagues to support a statehood bill, he collapsed and died in his office. Shortly afterward, the *Washington Post* predicted that Hawaiian statehood "will be Mr. Farrington's monument."[8] Betty Farrington had just returned to Honolulu to orchestrate the funeral services when Governor Sam King, Joe Farrington's friend and political ally, began pressing her to succeed her husband. She replied, "For heaven's sake, no!" King relented but

came back a week later, asking her to run "for Joe" and the cause of statehood. Betty Farrington agreed.

Being on the campaign trail was restorative for the widow Farrington. "I was just kind of numb, you know. I think it saved my life," she recalled. "I was doing something for him; carrying on for him, you know."[9] Farrington won the GOP nomination to succeed her husband, and in the July 31 special election she defeated Democrat Delbert Metzger and independent Helene Hale by garnering 66 percent of the vote in a light turnout. She topped Metzger, her nearest competitor, by more than 20,000 votes.[10]

Farrington took the oath of office and joined the 83rd Congress (1953–1955) on August 4, 1954, to a standing ovation. She immediately moved to the well and addressed the 200 Members in attendance. "Someday, somehow, I hope that by action and deed I can prove to you how deeply I have appreciated the many expressions of sympathy during the past few weeks," Farrington said. "It has given me the courage and the strength to carry on in the manner that I know Joe would have me do, in the manner that I know the people of Hawaii would have me do."[11] Parliamentarians could not remember a newly sworn-in Member ever having given such an address.[12] Farrington got an immediate boost when she inherited her husband's top-tier committee assignments on the Armed Services, the Agriculture, and the Interior and Insular Affairs committees. She retained these posts for the duration of her House tenure. Farrington's service on the Agriculture Committee marked the first by a woman.

Delegate Farrington immediately got to work on the issue of statehood, which was the central and defining facet of her House career. The day after her swearing-in, long-time friend John Saylor, a Pennsylvania Representative and key member of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, arranged a meeting with President Dwight Eisenhower to discuss statehood. During her Oval Office visit, Farrington pushed a plan for dual admittance: Hawaii and Alaska. In fact, she recalled that she spent more time pitching the concept of Alaskan statehood to President Eisenhower than that of Hawaii.[13]

Days after meeting with the President, Farrington took to the House Floor to push for debate for Hawaiian statehood. Critics objected that Hawaii was vulnerable to communist infiltration from Asian "subversives" and labor agitators in California. With World War II still a potent memory, opponents also doubted the loyalty of the large Japanese population living on the island. Farrington countered that a vote for statehood "would be an act of vision because, even at this late hour, it would tell the freedom-loving peoples of Asia, who are engaged in a great struggle against communism, that we Americans do practice what we preach."[14] The bill for Hawaiian statehood alone had passed the House in the 80th (1947–1949), 81st (1949–1951), and 83rd Congresses but had never been reconciled with the Senate version. In the 83rd Congress, the Senate added on an amendment that also sought statehood for Alaska. It was that version of the bill that the House Rules Committee refused to allow out onto the floor for debate. It lapsed at the end of the Congress.

Simultaneous with that development, Farrington contended with another electoral campaign. In the 1954 general election, she faced Democrat John A. "Jack" Burns, chairman of the Honolulu traffic safety commission, whom her husband had resoundingly defeated in 1948.[15] Democrats in territorial and local offices, however, surged to power in the 1954 midterm elections, campaigning on a platform of better employment, higher taxes for social services, and better schools. For the first time in Hawaii's 54 years as a territory, Democrats seized control of the legislature.[16] Farrington, who had won by a 2–1 margin in the special election just three months earlier, barely defeated Burns, with a margin of 890 votes out of more than 138,000 cast.[17]

After returning to Washington, Farrington renewed her call for joint Hawaiian–Alaskan statehood. Still, powerful House leaders and the Rules Committee, despite the change in party control in the 84th Congress (1955–1957), opposed the proposal.[18] Appearing before the Rules Committee, Farrington blasted redbaiting tactics as "extravagant, undocumented and unsupported" and as

"an insult to the majority of Hawaii's traditionally loyal population."[19] Eventually, after extensive hearings before the Rules Committee in which numerous allegations were made about communist influences in Hawaii, the bill came to the House Floor for sharply curtailed debate. The measure went down to defeat by a vote of 218 to 170 on May 10, 1955.

As a Delegate, Farrington could not vote on the House Floor, but she could participate in virtually every other capacity. Alliance building became critical to her success.[20] She enjoyed a number of minor legislative victories for her district, including the creation of the Geophysics Institute at the University of Hawaii, the creation of the "City of Refuge" on the Island of Hawaii as a national historic park, the repeal of an expensive travel tax from the mainland to Hawaii that opponents believed hurt tourism, and the return of Fort Armstrong to the Territory of Hawaii. Farrington also managed to secure the reapportionment of the Territorial Legislature, allowing more equitable representation for the higher population areas.

Farrington ran for re-election in 1956, again facing Jack Burns and a groundswell of support for Democratic candidates. Voter discontent, spurred by the partisan actions of Governor King, who repeatedly used his veto to block Democratic legislative programs, helped bring about an abrupt end to Farrington's congressional career. Burns campaigned on a simple platform—aimed as much at King as at Farrington. He called for the right of Hawaiians to elect their own governor if Congress again refused to grant statehood. He also suggested a congressional investigation of King's practices was in order.[21] Farrington garnered only 45 percent of the vote in an election which polled the largest turnout ever cast for a Hawaii Delegate. Her defeat sent a Democrat to the House for the first time since Hawaii was awarded a Delegate's seat in 1932.

After leaving Congress, Farrington resumed her newspaper work, serving as president of the *Star Bulletin* until 1961. Farrington lived to see her husband's dream of statehood for Hawaii realized in 1959. She was invited to the ceremony at which President Eisenhower signed the legislation that made Hawaii the 50th state to enter the Union.[22] She also directed and chaired the Honolulu Lithograph Company, Ltd., from 1957 to 1961 and was president of the Hawaiian Broadcasting System, Ltd., from 1960 to 1963. In 1969, President Richard Nixon appointed Farrington Director of the Office of the Territories in the Department of the Interior. When the Department of the Interior abolished the post in 1971, she worked in the congressional liaison office until 1973. After retirement, Betty Farrington returned to Honolulu, where she lived until her death on July 21, 1984.

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Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), Manuscript Division. *Oral History:* Transcript in the Oral History Collection of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. Sound recording in the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division.

Delegate Farrington argued that a vote for Hawaiian statehood, "would be an act of vision because, even at this late hour, it would tell the freedom-loving peoples of Asia, who are engaged in a great struggle against communism, that we Americans do practice what we preach."

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22 Farrington, Oral History Interview, USAFMOC: 65.

Hazel Hempel Abel
1888–1966

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEBRASKA
1954

Hazel Hempel Abel, an accomplished businesswoman and Republican Party official, was elected to the U.S. Senate from Nebraska to fill a two-month term created by a technicality in the state's election law. Though her service was brief, Abel participated in an historic censure of fellow Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin for his aggressive redbaiting tactics.

Hazel Pearl Hempel was born in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, on July 10, 1888. Her mother was Ella Beetison Hempel, and her father, Charles Hempel, worked as a railroad official. Hazel Hempel went to Omaha High School and graduated in 1908 from the University of Nebraska with a B.A. and a teaching certificate. Prior to her marriage to George Abel in 1916, she worked as a teacher instructing high school students in mathematics, English, Latin, and German. The Abels raised five children: Helen, George, Hazel, Alice, and Annette. While managing family responsibilities, Hazel Abel later served as a high school principal in three Nebraska towns. She left teaching to work for the Abel Construction Company as secretary-treasurer for 20 years, assuming the company's presidency after her husband's death in 1937. She served in that capacity until 1951 and once observed that her education and managerial experience made the transition into those responsibilities of company head somewhat easier. "These assets compensated somewhat for my lack of knowledge about cement mixing," she quipped. Hazel Abel also served as a trustee for four colleges, including the University of Nebraska, and became a driving force in reforms in the juvenile probation system and juvenile courts and in a broad recodification of the state's children's laws.[1] Abel also was an active member of the Nebraska Republican Party, eventually chairing the state's GOP Central Committee.

A quirk in Nebraska election laws launched Abel's brief career in elective politics. Eva Bowring, who had been appointed in April 1954 to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Dwight Griswold, was barred by law from serving past the date of the first general election following her appointment. That fall, a special election open only to candidates not seeking the six-year term in the Senate was set for November 2, 1954. Hopefuls from both parties seized on the opportunity to run for the brief, 60-day term. Sixteen Republicans and three Democrats jumped into the race. The 66-year-old Abel outran the field. Dubbed "Hurricane Hazel," she waged a high-energy campaign conducted from the driver's seat of her automobile as she crisscrossed the state.[2] Her platform was centered on support for the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration's foreign and domestic policies. She beat her nearest GOP rival by nearly 20,000 votes and swept past her chief opponent, William Meier, the state's Democratic chairman, by carrying 86 of Nebraska's 93 counties and 58 percent of the total vote.[3] Nebraska election law would not certify the election, however, until November 22, which posed a problem because immediately after the elections, the Senate determined that it would come back into session to hold censure proceedings against Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy. Governor Robert Crosby, therefore, took the unusual step of appointing Abel to succeed Bowring, which allowed her to be seated immediately.[4]

On November 8, 1954, with her five children and other family members looking on, Abel became the first woman to succeed a woman in the Senate.[5] On November 30, she

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was appointed to the Finance Committee and the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, the latter assignment having been held by her predecessors, Bowring and Griswold.[6] Her only floor speech during the Senate's abbreviated three-week session was a eulogy of former Nebraska Senator Hugh Butler, whom she had known through her work as a trustee of Doane College.[7] Abel's presence, however, was widely noted simply because she and Margaret Chase Smith were the only women in the Senate. Her presence created some confusion in Washington social circles. Shortly after taking office, she received an invitation to the British Embassy for a reception for the visiting Queen Mother Elizabeth. Upon arriving at the embassy door and identifying herself, a British diplomat refused her entry, insisting that he thought Smith was the only woman in the Senate. Eventually Abel's daughter, Helen, a writer for the *San Diego Union,* who also was attending, came to the door and identified her mother, who was then allowed to enter.[8]

Just days after taking her seat, Abel participated in the historic censure of Joseph McCarthy, whose hearings into the activities of alleged communists in the U.S. government mesmerized the American public and intimidated federal employees and many politicians in Washington. Political observers believed that she would join her Nebraska colleague, Senator Roman Hruska, in voting against censure. Before the proceedings, Abel told the *Washington Post*, "I came to Washington to hear the discussion during the session. I have not made up my mind either way."[9] She did not participate in the rancorous floor debates that raged between McCarthy's critics and defenders but instead carefully studied the evidence. Poring over the thousands of words of testimony and remaining on the Senate Floor on the final day of the debate without taking a break, Abel voted with the majority—67 to 22—to reprimand McCarthy on December 2, 1954, for his sensational and redbaiting investigatory tactics. That day the Senate adjourned, bringing Abel's active work in the upper chamber to a close.[10]

Hazel Abel resigned her seat on December 31, 1954, three days before the expiration of her term, to give fellow Republican Carl Curtis of Nebraska, elected to the six-year term in November, a seniority advantage. She later observed that she campaigned for the two-month term to raise the visibility of women in political office. "To me it was more than just a short term in the Senate," Abel recalled for *Newsweek*. "I wanted Nebraska voters to express their approval of a woman in government. I was sort of a guinea pig."[11]

Abel returned to an active civic life in Nebraska. She chaired the Nebraska Republican state delegation at the 1956 national convention. In 1957, Abel was chosen the "American Mother," an honor which included an invitation to the Brussels International Exposition to address the Mothers of the World. She also served as the chairwoman of the board of trustees of Doane College in Lincoln, Nebraska. She unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for governor of Nebraska in 1960. In 1963 the University of Nebraska conferred an honorary LL.D. to Abel for her work as a teacher and political leader. Hazel Abel died in Lincoln on July 30, 1966.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Hazel Hempel Abel," http://bioguide.congress.gov

NOTES

1 American Mothers Committee, *Mothers of Achievement in American History, 1776–1976* (Rutland, VT: C.E. Tuttle and Company, 1976): 388.
2 Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members*: *Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973): 244.
3 Michael J. Dubin et al., *United States Congressional Elections, 1788–1997* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers): 596.
4 "Distaff Senators Are Firsts," 6 November, 1954, *Washington Post*: 23.
5 Elizabeth Ford, "Abel Clan Sees Senator Sworn In," 9 November 1954, *Washington Post*: 31; "Distaff Senators Are Firsts."
6 For committee assignments, see Garrison Nelson, *Committees in the U.S. Congress, 1947 to 1992* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993). Her successor, Curtis, did not receive posts on either of these committees. See also, "Random Notes From Washington: President Seeks a Liberal G.O.P.," 27 December 1954, *New York Times*: 7.
7 *Congressional Record*, Senate, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess. (9 November 1954): 15895.
8 "Random Notes From Washington: High Court Gives Itself Hearing," 15 November 1954, *New York Times*: 20.
9 "3 New Senators To Act on Censure," 5 November 1954, *New York Times*: 6; Ford, "Abel Clan Sees Senator Sworn In."
10 *Congressional Record*, Senate, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess. (2 December 1954): 16392.
11 Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members*: 246.